

Title of Thesis: “To explore the tangible attributes contributing to Brand Meaning. A study of local food brands”.

Jill Quest

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Jill Quest: To explore the tangible attributes contributing to Brand Meaning. A study of local food brands.

### **Abstract**

Brand Meaning is a central concept in brand management and has been associated with brands offering symbolic intangible associations to consumers beyond their functional benefits. Tangible attributes relating to the senses and a brand's functional performance have been overshadowed by these intangible associations, and this is addressed in this study by exploring these tangible attributes' contribution to brand meaning.

By creating a conceptual framework which evolves Hirschman's (1980; 1998) layers of meaning, this research uses quasi-ethnographic research methods to explore the contribution of the sensorial and functional attributes to brand meaning. Furthermore, it gains insight into how the tangible attributes connect with the intangible associations (psychological, subcultural and cultural). Finally, it explores any hierarchical structures evident in brand meaning. The context for this research is local food brands available in the vicinity of Dorset.

The findings from this small-scale study reveal that tangible attributes can have meaning both sensorially and functionally. From a sensorial aspect, consumers can accept incongruity across the senses; furthermore, this creates brand distinctiveness when recalled in memory. From a functional perspective, consumers are highly involved with consumption choices in the local food brand category. The connectivity element is strong in that tangible attributes evidence intangible associations. They contribute to a positive self-concept and a shared ethos, through the notion of doing and feeling good.

Finally, not only are hierarchical approaches evident but there are also flatter patterned approaches apparent amongst the brand attributes and associations. This research makes an original contribution to knowledge regarding brand meaning structures. Hierarchical connections across tangible attributes and intangible associations should not always be assumed. This study discerns an approach that is flatter and non-hierarchical. Tangible attributes can be interwoven with intangible associations. This pattern approach may contain mainly woven functional attributes, revealing functional connections and meanings. Alternatively, the pattern can have threads of tangible attributes that interweave with intangible associations creating more symbolic meanings.

## Table of Contents

Table of Contents .....	4
List of Figures .....	10
Chapter One: Introduction.....	14
1.0 Overview of the Thesis.....	14
1.1 Rationale.....	14
1.2 Structure of the Thesis.....	18
1.3 Local Food Application and Context .....	18
1.3.1 Commodities, Products or Brands? .....	19
1.3.2 Local Brands and Local Food.....	20
1.3.3 Accreditation Schemes .....	20
1.3.4 Local Food Brands.....	22
Chapter Two: Literature Review.....	25
2.0 Overview .....	25
2.1 Section One: Deconstructing Brand Meaning.....	25
2.1.1 The Meaning of a Brand .....	25
2.1.2 Brand Meaning .....	26
2.1.3 Meaning of Meaning.....	28
2.1.4 Dichotomy, attributes and associations .....	32
2.1.5 Tangible Attributes .....	33
2.1.6 Intangible Associations.....	36
2.2 Section Two: The Senses .....	38
2.2.1 Afferent, Efferent and Multisensory .....	38
2.2.2 Sensory Congruency .....	41
2.2.3 Individual Sense: Taste.....	44
2.2.4 Individual Sense: Sight .....	45
2.2.6 Individual Sense: Haptics .....	46

2.2.6.1 Haptic and Packaging .....	47
2.2.7 Individual Sense: Smell .....	47
2.2.8 Individual Sense: Sound .....	48
2.3 Section Three: Functional Attributes .....	50
2.3.1 Typical Functional Attributes .....	52
2.3.2 Local Food Functional Attributes .....	53
2.3.3 Functional Attributes and Involvement .....	55
2.3.4 Functionality's Contribution to Brand Meaning.....	57
2.4 Section Four: Intangible Associations.....	59
2.4.1 Psychological Associations.....	60
2.4.2 Subcultural Associations.....	62
2.4.3 Cultural Associations .....	62
2.5 Section Five: Hierarchical Connections .....	69
2.5.1 Means-Ends Theory .....	70
2.5.2 Consumer Behaviour Perspectives .....	73
2.5.3 Literature Review Summary .....	82
2.6 Section Six: Conceptual Framework .....	83
Chapter Three Methodology .....	89
3.0 Overview .....	89
3.1 Research Aim and Objectives .....	90
3.2 Research Philosophy .....	91
3.3 Research Methodology .....	93
3.4 Research Design .....	94
3.5 Research Methods .....	94
3.5.1 Time Horizon.....	96
3.5.2 Sampling Strategy.....	96
3.6 Data Collection.....	99

3.6.1 Pilot Studies .....	100
3.6.2 Participant Observation.....	101
3.6.3 Accompanied shopping trips .....	103
3.6.4 Kitchen Visits .....	104
3.6.5 Interviews with no natural local food setting.....	105
3.6.6 Interviews taking place in a natural local food setting .....	106
3.7 Data Analysis .....	107
3.7.1 Units of Analysis .....	107
3.7.2 Thematic Analysis Approach.....	109
3.7.3 Using Qualitative Data Analysis Software (NVivo 10).....	110
3.8 Assessment of the quality of the empirical research .....	119
3.8.1 Authenticity .....	119
3.8.2 Trustworthiness.....	120
3.8.3 Credibility .....	120
3.8.4 Transferability.....	121
3.8.5 Dependability.....	121
3.8.6 Confirmability.....	122
3.9 Research Ethics .....	122
4.0 Overview .....	124
4.0.1 Respondent Insights.....	124
4.1. Research Objective One (RO1): To explore the contribution of the direct sensory attributes to brand meaning of local food brands. ....	127
4.1.1 Direct Sensory.....	127
4.1.2 Discussion: Afferent or Efferent? .....	131
4.1.3 Sensory Congruity .....	133
4.1.4 Discussion: Congruity or Incongruity?.....	135
4.2 Research Objective Two (RO2): To understand the contribution of functional attributes to brand meaning of local food brands. ....	136

4.2.1 Use-Value and Involvement .....	136
4.2.2 Connection with the senses.....	137
4.2.3 Pricing and Affordability .....	138
4.2.4 Supporting Farmers and Animal Welfare .....	138
4.2.5 Considered Planning and Preparation:.....	140
4.2.6 Discussion: Low or High Involvement? .....	141
4.2.7 Packaging Perception.....	143
4.2.8 Discussion: Commercial or Uncommercial? .....	145
4.3. Research Objective Three (RO3): To explore the connections between the tangible attributes and the intangible associations. ....	146
4.3.1 Tangible Attributes Doing Good .....	147
4.3.2 Intangible Associations and Memories.....	148
4.3.3 Intangible Associations, Self-concept and Feeling Good.....	150
4.3.4 Intangible Associations, Doing and Feeling Good for the Community .....	151
4.3.5 Intangible Associations: A Good Story is a Gift .....	154
4.3.6 Discussion: Doing Good and Feeling Good .....	157
4.3.7 Culture and Heritage of Local Food Brands around Dorset. ....	159
4.3.8 Discussion: Dorset’s Place.....	161
4.4. Research Objective Four (RO4): To gain an in-depth understanding of how tangible attributes contribute towards any hierarchy of meaning .....	162
4.4.1 Hierarchy .....	162
4.4.2 Discussion: Short or Tall Hierarchies? .....	166
4.4.3 Pattern .....	167
4.4.4 Discussion: Pattern .....	170
Chapter Five: Conclusion.....	174
5.0 Overview .....	174
5.1 Conclusions .....	175
5.1.1 Tangible attributes can have meaning, both sensorially and functionally. ....	175

5.1.2 Incongruity across the senses is acceptable by consumers and creates distinctiveness when recalled in memory. ....	176
5.1.3 Consumers are highly involved with consumption choices in the local food brand category.....	177
5.1.4 Tangible attributes connect with intangible associations, contributing to a positive self-concept and a shared ethos, through the notion of doing and feeling good. ....	177
5.1.5 Both hierarchical and flatter patterned approaches to the connections between the attributes and associations are present. ....	178
5.2 Implications for Brand Meaning Theory.....	180
5.3 Original Contributions to Knowledge .....	182
5.4 Limitations.....	183
5.5 Areas for Future Research .....	184
5.6 Lists of Publications .....	185
References .....	187
Appendix One: Location of Dorset on England’s south coast.....	225
Appendix Two: Summary of Local Food Brands’ location, distribution, supply chain and website details. ....	226
Appendix Three: Hultén’s (2011) description of Wholefoods multi-sensory strategy.....	232
Appendix Four: Summary of Pilot Respondents .....	233
Appendix Five: Summary of Respondents and Interactions .....	234
Appendix Six: Summary of observational and reflective notes for each respondent including their profile. ....	236
Appendix Seven: Pilot Discussion Guide.....	252
Appendix Eight: Summarised Field Notes from Pilot Venue.....	253
Appendix Nine: Learning from Pilot.....	256
Appendix Ten: Reflexivity Statement .....	258

Appendix 11: Discussion Guide for accompanied shopping trips, kitchen visits and interviews.....	259
Appendix 12: Examples of prompt photographs of local food brands.....	261
Appendix 13: Member checked scripts .....	266
Appendix 14: Approved Ethics checklist .....	300
Appendix 15: Participant Information Sheet – Accompanied shopping trip.....	303
Appendix 16: Participant Consent Form .....	304

## List of Figures

<i>Figure One: Hirschman's Layers of meaning (1980, p.12) as taken from her original paper. ....</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Figure Two: Local food brand images.....</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Figure Three: Layers of Meaning (Hirschman 1998).....</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Figure Four: Tangible Attributes (Hirschman; 1980, p.10).....</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>Figure Five: Tangible Attributes adapted from Hirschman (1980) .....</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>Figure Six: Intangible Attributes (Hirschman, 1980 p.10).....</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>Figure Seven: Intangible Associations adapted from Hirschman (1980).....</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>Figure Eight: Means-Ends Laddering Approach: Adapted from Gutman (1982).....</i>	<i>70</i>
<i>Figure Nine: The Brand Pyramid: De Chernatony (2006 p.259).....</i>	<i>73</i>
<i>Figure Ten: Associative Brand Network for 7 Up: Franzen and Bouwman (2001 p.179) .....</i>	<i>79</i>
<i>Figure 11: Engram of 7-Up: Dunsdon (2009 p.15).....</i>	<i>80</i>
<i>Figure 12: The Gatorade Brand as Associative Neural Network: Batey (2016 p.5).....</i>	<i>81</i>
<i>Figure 13: Conceptual Associative Model Donius (1994) as cited by Franzen and Bowman (2001).....</i>	<i>85</i>
<i>Figure 14: Brand Meaning Conceptual Framework .....</i>	<i>87</i>
<i>Figure 15: Methodological Approach .....</i>	<i>89</i>
<i>Figure 16: Quasi-ethnographic research tools .....</i>	<i>95</i>
<i>Figure 17: Operationalisation Table .....</i>	<i>99</i>
<i>Figure 18: Units of analysis derived from the conceptual framework .....</i>	<i>108</i>
<i>Figure 19: Stages and Process involved in Qualitative Analysis: Miles and Huberman (1994) Practical Application in NVivo .....</i>	<i>111</i>
<i>Figure 20: Respondent data capture including transcriptions of interviews and observations. ....</i>	<i>112</i>
<i>Figure 21: Open Code Phase.....</i>	<i>113</i>
<i>Figure 22: Node Properties .....</i>	<i>114</i>
<i>Figure 23: Re-categorisation of Data.....</i>	<i>115</i>
<i>Figure 24: Thematic chart showing themes in relation to objectives.....</i>	<i>116</i>
<i>Figure 25: Psychological layer and related memos: first stage.....</i>	<i>117</i>
<i>Figure 26: Analytical memos second stage. ....</i>	<i>118</i>

*Figure 27: Flora's Pattern of Attributes and Associations for Trill Farm..... 172*  
*Figure 28: Revised Brand Meaning Conceptual Framework..... 181*  
*Figure 29: Pattern of Tangible Attributes and Intangible Associations..... 181*

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**Author's declaration**

I declare that this thesis is all my own work and the sources of information and the material I have used (including the internet) have been fully identified and properly acknowledged. I also declare that the hard copy and online submission of the thesis are identical to one another.

Student signature:

## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **1.0 Overview of the Thesis**

The phrase ‘brand meaning’ has been associated with brands offering intangible symbolic associations to consumers beyond their functional benefits. Tangible attributes relating to the senses and a brand’s functional performance have been overshadowed in the literature by these intangible associations, and this research is important as it explores these tangible attributes’ contribution to brand meaning. Previous brand meaning approaches have tended to focus on intangible associations such as those that are psychological, subcultural and cultural. As such the role of tangible attributes has yet to be explored including the sensorial and functional, their connections with intangible associations and the contribution they make to any hierarchy of attributes and associations.

The area of application for this study is local food brands. Local food per se has received attention through investigating consumer drivers and motivations however local food *brands* have not received much attention. This chapter firstly explains the rationale for the conducting this research and introduces Hirschman’s (1980) paper which is the basis for the conceptual framework. It outlines the structure of the thesis. Secondly, it gives the context for the area of application which is that of local food brands. It explains what is meant by commodities, products, local brands, local foods and accreditation schemes. Furthermore, it justifies why local food brands are appropriate for this study.

### **1.1 Rationale**

Understanding brand meaning remains a priority for marketers (Berthon et al. 2009; Batey 2016). Keller (2012) determines that brand meaning is essential to understand as it is a central concept in branding, making a valuable contribution to brand management and brand strategy, complementing existing approaches to understanding brands. The aim of this research is to explore the tangible attributes of brand meaning in the context of local food brands, therefore complementing a body of brand meaning knowledge dealing with intangible associations.

An early journal article ‘Attributes of Attributes and Layers of Meaning’ published in *Advances in Consumer Research* in 1980, written by Professor Elizabeth Hirschman, highlighted the importance of the intangible attributes of product meaning and informed this current study which seeks to explore the contribution of tangible attributes to brand meaning. The conceptual framework is based on Hirschman’s (1980) layers of meaning. This article is not very widely cited, possibly due to its age and its limited availability (it is not available on the Scopus database or via EBSCO Information Services) but it has significantly informed both Franzen and Bouwman (2001) and Batey’s (2016) renowned texts. It is highly relevant for this research as Hirschman introduces the terms tangible and intangible in a dichotomous setting and this is one of the earliest occasions when these terms are mentioned together, in a product marketing environment. Together with her layers of meaning, this provides an excellent basis upon which to build a conceptual framework for this research.

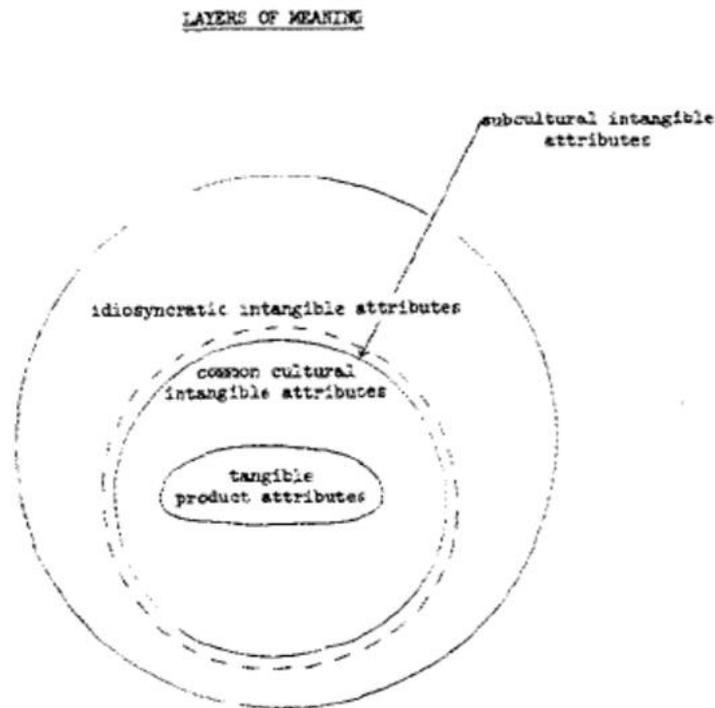
Hirschman explains that tangibility is an attribute “*accessible through the senses, it is palpable*” (p.9) and is viewed objectively. In contrast, she defined intangible attributes as existing “*only within the mind of the individual and are mentally rather than physically associated with the product*” (p.9). These are viewed subjectively. Hirschman is particularly interested in the intangible attributes, she says:

“*...a significant and related research question is determining the sources from which consumers derive the intangible attributes*” (p.9).

Within this study a significant and related research question is to explore the sources from which consumers derive the *tangible* attributes and therefore understand the contribution of tangible attributes to brand meaning.

Hirschman (1980) develops her discussion around intangible attributes to introduce her ideas related to her cultural, subcultural and idiosyncratic layers of meaning. She is not interested in the tangible attributes as she appears to assume that they do not vary from person to person and from culture to culture. She explains that a common cultural layer comprises of common beliefs shared across the same society. Idiosyncratic meanings come from unique associations that an individual consumer gives depending on their prior experiences. Furthermore, a subcultural layer was inserted between the two that recognises a common meaning across a subculture or an ethnic group (see Figure One, which was taken from her original paper to demonstrate its age and authenticity). Of

importance is that Hirschman's (1980) layers of meaning also concur with previous scholars' assertions on the meaning of meaning such as Linton (1936); Lindesmith and Strauss (1949) and Gould and Kolb (1964).



*Figure One: Hirschman's Layers of meaning (1980, p.12) as taken from her original paper.*

Hirschman's (1980) layers are useful to guide later contributions to brand meaning developed within the literature review. Thus, the cultural layers will include contributions from Brown, Kozinets and Sherry writing in 2003, picking up on themes such as storytelling, and symbolism as identified earlier by Levy in 1959. The subcultural layer includes insights from Escalas and Bettman (2005) who refer to self-reference groups and the idiosyncratic layer includes considerations about memory (Franzen and Bouwman 2001) and the self-concept (Belk 1988; Dittmar 1992).

Throughout her career Hirschman has been eager to explore and develop intangible associations (cultural, subcultural and idiosyncratic), with a further focus in her later works providing valuable insight into the symbolic and the hedonic. Together with scholars such as Russell Belk (1988), Michael Solomon (1999), David Glen Mick (2004) and John Sherry (2005), she was part of an influential movement that generated a wealth of literature around the cultural, social and psychological contributions towards brand

meaning, developing innovative, in-depth understandings through research approaches based in the interpretive paradigm.

However, this focus on the cultural, subcultural and psychological has tended to overshadow further understanding of the tangible attributes (direct sensory and functional) and they now deserve more scholarly attention. Hirschman's earlier work was written at a time when there was an emergence from a more objective, tangible, product-focused approach. She commented on the research focus of tangible properties that were '*objectively verifiable*' (p.12) and suggested that the '*proportion of meaning*' (p.11) generated by the tangible attributes was shrinking in relation to the '*proportion of meaning*' (p.11) contributed by intangible, subjective associations. Therefore, the objective, positivist research approach was losing importance at that time.

The tangible attributes now deserve further scrutiny and their importance needs reassessment. However, an interpretivist approach is applied to the tangible attributes fitting with previous research approaches applied to the intangible associations from Hirschman and other previously cited eminent scholars. In a similar way, it is noted that over the last few decades the 'product' has evolved further into the 'brand' drawing upon more emotional or intangible meanings (De Chernatony and McDonald 2011). Therefore, it is timely to return to the tangible attributes of brands and explore their contribution to brand meaning. Hirschman's (1980) theoretical foundations assist by viewing her labels and framework through a branded lens and provide the basis for the conceptual framework. As such, her article is an intriguing first step for understanding brand meaning and she referenced it frequently in her later, more widely cited publications. However, as it focuses on the intangible associations and was written nearly forty years ago, it now warrants revisiting and updating through reviewing more recent literature to become relevant for 21<sup>st</sup> century brands.

It is anticipated that this research therefore would fill a knowledge gap in the literature by exploring the contribution of tangible attributes to brand meaning. This is supported by Keller and Lehmann (2006) who call for further research concerning the role of product performance and objective or tangible attributes versus intangible image. Tangible attributes include the sensorial and functional. A wealth of literature has established intangible associations and their contribution to brand meaning (e.g. Eckhardt and Houston 2002; Brown et al, 2003; Achenreiner and John 2003; Escalas and Bettman 2005; Braun-La Tour et al. 2007). Therefore, this research is continuing a previous

original piece of work making it fit for 21<sup>st</sup> century brands and brings new evidence to bear on an old issue. As such it synthesises brand meaning by combining further elements such as the perspectives of sensory and functional meanings to psychological, subcultural and cultural layers and this has not been done before. Sensorial and functional attributes have not been researched earlier in the context of brand meaning. Therefore, this adds to knowledge in a way that has not been looked at before.

## **1.2 Structure of the Thesis**

Chapter One (Introduction) gives an overview of the thesis, rationale, and provides a background to local food brands. Chapter Two (Literature Review) establishes the theoretical foundations relevant to this study, culminating in a conceptual framework upon which the research objectives are based. Chapter Three (Methodology) presents the ontological constructionist philosophy and the qualitative methods, including quasi-ethnographic approaches (Elliott and Jankel-Elliott 2003) consisting of accompanied shopping trips to farm shops and food fairs, kitchen visits, and interviews. Chapter Four (Findings and Discussion) discusses the sensorial and functional tangible attributes, their connections with the intangible associations and explores any hierarchical layered approaches or alternatives. Finally, Chapter Five (Conclusions) details the conclusions, and the original contribution to knowledge arising from the research.

## **1.3 Local Food Application and Context**

The local food brand application of this research was influenced by the author's professional practice with Bournemouth University. This has involved consultancy work with Parnham Food Fair, which was based in Beaminster, west Dorset. In addition, the author is a board member of the Bournemouth and Poole Sustainable City Partnership which, amongst its objectives, promotes a vibrant and sustainable food economy, raising awareness for local food.

There has been increased attention from academics investigating drivers for purchasing local food (e.g. Kemp et al. 2010; Dukeshire et al. 2011; Pearson et al. 2011; Bianchi and Mortimer 2015) albeit they are silent on local food *brands*. In addition, local food sales in the UK are growing; they were worth over £12.4 billion in 2015 and will rise to an

estimated £13.2 billion by 2021 (Mintel 2017). There is evidence of potential brand attributes and associations; within this category consumers rank ‘locally sourced’ and ‘British- made’ as two of the most important reasons to buy, when shopping for food and drink (ibid).

### **1.3.1 Commodities, Products or Brands?**

Some distinction between commodities, product and brands is useful as all may be found within the local food category. A commodity is a raw material such as tin, or a primary agricultural product such as wheat, which can be bought and sold. It is both useful and valuable. Within the local food category commodities can include vegetables grown on allotments, milk and flour, and Goodchild and Callow (2001) suggest that commodities are both functionally and emotionally undifferentiated.

Farquhar (1989) defines a product as something that “*offers a functional benefit*” (p.24) and Lieberman (2010) asserts that “*If a product is not a brand, it is a commodity*” (p.46). Sterenburg and Baker (2005) contend that offering the same functional benefits as other products in your category is insufficient, there is a lack of meaningful performance differentiation.

Whilst there are local foods that may be determined as more commodity or product focused, there is interest here on the brand meaning of local food *brands*. This anticipates the identification and interplay of both tangible attributes and intangible associations which reflect the “*cluster of functional and emotional values*” as determined by De Chernatony et al. (2011, p.31) that comprise a brand. Jevons (2007) reflects this dichotomy in his brand definition:

*“A brand is a tangible or intangible concept that uniquely identifies an offering, providing symbolic communication of functionality and differentiation, and in so doing sustainably influences the value offered”* (p.6).

Section 1.3.4 illustrates the types of local food-based brands that appear in this research.

### **1.3.2 Local Brands and Local Food**

Local brands can be defined as brands existing in one country or a limited geographical area (Wolfe 1991). They can be tailor-made to, and developed for, specific needs and wants of local markets (Özsomer 2012). Schuiling and Kapferer (2004) mention that there has been little attention paid to local brands however, there has been more interest recently albeit in the context of global brands (Steenkamp and De Jong 2010; Özsomer 2012; Steenkamp 2017; Llonch-Andeu et al. 2016).

Local food can be described as “*local food systems or short food chains where the food is produced near the consumer*” (Roininen et al. 2006, p.20). There has been some debate as to the definition of ‘local’ within the context of local food with the notable absence of a commonly held definition (Feldman and Hamm 2015), for example the term may contain more cultural meanings (Zepeda and Leviten-Reid 2004; Zepeda and Li 2006). However, within the UK, which is the context for this research, there is some support for ‘local’ to be defined as the produce coming from within a 30-mile radius (FARMA 2015; Campaign to Protect Rural England 2018) albeit this may be more of a general perception than a defined distance (DEFRA 2008). There are accompanying characteristics such as consumer recognition of the produce originating from a local source (Pearson et al. 2011) and being small-scale, green and of quality (Brown et al. 2009). The research is applied to local food brands in and around Dorset as the county offers a wide range of local brands. Dorset is situated on the south coast of England (see Appendix One). Appendix Two gives a useful summary of local food brands’ specific location, distribution, supply chain and website details. Local accreditation schemes (see next section) further define what can be grown/reared within that radius or what might be assembled/manufactured locally.

### **1.3.3 Accreditation Schemes**

Within the local food literature, there has been some scholarly attention taking a producer focus particularly around food accreditation schemes (Lowman and McClelland, 1994; Morris and Buller, 2003). Within the context of this research, there are two local accreditation schemes; the New Forest Marque and Dorset Food and Drink. Food accreditation or assurance schemes tend to be mainly voluntary arrangements, monitored by the Food Standards Agency (Food Standards Agency 2014). These schemes help to

provide consumers and businesses with guarantees that food has been produced to specific standards. They have been the result of food scares such as Bird Flu, BSE and Foot and Mouth disease and these had dramatic effects on supply chains and consumer consumption (Leat et al. 1998).

Food accreditation schemes have identified and labelled the provenance and production processes for specific food agricultural products to ensure consumer safety and traceability (Lowman and McClelland 1994; Morris and Buller 2003). Producers are attracted to schemes such as Red Tractor, Freedom Food and the Soil Association as they can add value and increase revenue (Ilbery et al. 2005), protection and enhancement of the environment (Murdoch et al. 2000), a formal structure to demonstrate that reasonable steps were taken to ensure that the products have been produced in a safe and animal welfare friendly manner (Parrot et al. 2002), and finally a sustainable means of producing traditional quality products within the local social and economic structure (Nygard and Storstad 1998; Holloway and Kneafsey 2000; Nilsson et al. 2004).

Membership criteria vary across different schemes. The New Forest Marque members adhere to a minimum of 25% of product that has been sourced within the boundary of the accreditation scheme (New Forest Marque 2015) whereas Dorset Food and Drink's scheme is less prescriptive. It welcomes:

*“every business with its roots in Dorset that grows, makes, brings significant added-value to, sells, serves or supports Dorset food and drink”* (Dorset Food and Drink 2015).

This definition has guided the inclusion of the local food brands within this research in that they are all either grown, reared or assembled in and around Dorset.

Accreditation labelling is also a complex situation and consumers do not always accurately understand the meaning behind the assurance scheme label. There is room for local producers to develop their own brands to denote high quality food that adheres to rigorous standards given there is a significant groundswell of interest in local food (DEFRA 2008; Countryfile 2012). This can include references to the local food culture (Tellstrom et al. 2006). Mintel (2013) supports that more should be done to demonstrate food provenance on-pack, consumers should be educated as to what logos such as Red Tractor represent.

On a larger scale, there are geographical indications and specialties including PDO (Protected Designation of Origin), PGI (Protected Geographical Indication) and TSG (Traditional Speciality Guaranteed) schemes (European Commission 2016) that protect and promote names of quality agricultural foodstuffs and products. For example, ‘Champagne’ relates to a region of France and is a category designation. Its origin descriptor may apply to many brands, but it is protected and differentiated against the claims of sparkling wines from other geographic regions such as Saumur which is made in the same way but as it is produced in the Loire, it cannot have ‘champagne’ status. FutureBrand (2015) identify assembly, processes or full manufacture, as well as patents and trademarks as tangible assets. They state that intangible assets are broader associations and captured in stories and symbols. Both types of assets are differentiating and powerful drivers of consumer choice.

#### **1.3.4 Local Food Brands**

The category of local food brands is of interest to this research. They tend to be less sophisticated as they originate from Small to Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and they have not benefitted from brand building to the same extent as other FMCG brands that have had more focused, longer- term attention. Nonetheless there is variation in sophistication across local food brands, ranging from a local butcher with the name of his shop acting as his brand through to the eponymous Dorset Cereals with its global footprint now reaching California and Black Cow Vodka gaining references within US dramas. Images of local food brands are shown in Figure Two, which gives examples of this varying sophistication.



*Sophisticated and Commercial local brands*

### *Quirky local brands*

### *Commodity-based local brands*

#### *Figure Two: Local food brand images*

Previous local food research has uncovered many motivations for purchase, many of which appear to be sensorial (e.g. taste) and functional (e.g. health and supporting the local economy) but there may be symbolic reasons too (e.g. in search of nostalgia or cultural authenticity). This diversity of potential tangible attributes and intangible associations justifies the need to understand brand meaning within this category. The breadth of brands available (see Appendix Two) will encourage discussion around the

sensorial and functional values that are tangible and the idiosyncratic, subcultural and cultural values which are intangible.

Therefore, local food brands are a worthy area of application for this research as this is a category that is experiencing increasing consumer interest evidenced by strong sales growth. There is increased academic attention in this area, but this is limited to local foods, not local food *brands*. Whilst this attention has uncovered some of the drivers for local food consumption which may reflect functional attributes, the literature is silent on the sensorial attributes. Previous academic research in this area has been largely quantitative and there is an opportunity to explore the local food brand meaning through qualitative methods.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

### **2.0 Overview**

This chapter reviews the main academic arguments found within the literature. It is organised into six sections. Firstly, it commences with an interrogation of the meaning of meaning as far as it relates to understanding brands and brand meaning. Hirschman's approaches to tangible attributes and intangible associations are critiqued with updated versions proposed. The second section begins to create the pillars of the conceptual framework by discussing the sensorial tangible attributes, followed by the third section that deals with functional tangible attributes. Fourthly, intangible associations are then discussed, namely the psychological, subcultural and cultural with observations as to how the tangible attributes interplay with the intangible associations. The fifth section discusses hierarchical approaches to meaning and any alternative approaches that organise brand meaning. Finally, the sixth section presents the conceptual framework, reflecting the appropriate pillars from the literature, which updates and develops Hirschman's 1980 and 1998 approaches.

### **2.1 Section One: Deconstructing Brand Meaning**

#### **2.1.1 The Meaning of a Brand**

To fully understand brand meaning, the *meaning* of a brand and the *meaning of brand meaning* need to be established, which in turn reveal their contribution to the brand concept. To delve further the *meaning of meaning* is encountered. The work of Elizabeth Hirschman (1980; 1998) is particularly useful as she is one of the earliest researchers to define the terms 'tangible' and 'intangible' within her layers of meaning approach. Keller (2012) determines that brand meaning is a central concept in branding and one that is essential for marketers to understand. Brand meaning makes a valuable contribution to brand management and brand strategy, complementing existing approaches to understanding brands.

The key components of a brand, namely both tangible attributes and intangible associations, reflect a dichotomous approach. Tangible attributes include the functional

and intangible associations include the symbolic. This is evidenced by Jevons (2007) who synthesised several scholarly brand approaches. His own definition states that:

*“A brand is a tangible or intangible concept that uniquely identifies an offering, providing symbolic communication of functionality and differentiation, and in so doing sustainably influences the value offered”* (p.6).

Many scholars (Martineau 1958; Ambler and Styles 1996; Reizebos 2003; De Chernatony and McDonald 2011) also reflect this dichotomy of tangible attributes and intangible associations with their definitions or meaning of a brand. Tangible attributes and intangible associations will be further discussed later in this section.

### **2.1.2 Brand Meaning**

This concept has attracted interest within the literature as far back as 1959, when Levy (1959, p.119) was proposing that:

*“The things people buy are seen to have personal and social meanings in addition to their functions”*.

More recently it has been asserted that brand meaning can incorporate brand reputation, brand identity and brand image (Veloutsou and Delgado-Ballester 2018). Brand reputation relates to brand identity as it encompasses the company’s proposition and its promises made, and, aligning with brand image, the consumers’ experiences of those promises (Veloutsou and Moutinho 2009). Michel (2017) offers a parallel with an architect (brand owner) and occupier (brand consumer) with the latter putting their interpretation through furnishings on the house’s basic design. This introduces the notion of co-creation. In recent years there has been more focus on multi-stakeholder co-creation of brand meaning (e.g. Berthon et al. 2009; Merrilees et al. 2012; Iglesias and Bonet 2012; Vallaster and von Wallpach 2013) moving away from understanding brand meaning per se. There is recognition that consumers appear to be the most significant contributors in the development of brand meaning (Veloutsou and Delgado-Ballester 2018). Merrilees and Miller (2010) find that more brand involved consumers have more brand associations than those that are less involved, and deeper, richer textures of brand associations are formed by those loyal consumers rather those that are more intermittent. Therefore, it is timely to revisit our understanding of brand meaning with this consumer focus using local

food brands as application. This will assist in clarifying the concept on brand meaning within the branding literature.

Merrilees and Miller (2016) note the importance of brand associations in creating brand meaning and Feldwick (2002, p.11) defines brand meaning as “*the collective associations and beliefs that a consumer has about a brand*”. A commonly cited definition of brand meaning is that of Franzen and Bowman (2001). They articulate their understanding of brand meaning as “*the mental links of a brand name to cognitions in the long-term memory*” (p.367). Batey (2008) develops this by offering that brand meaning is a combination of “*unconscious biological drives and hard wired’ instincts*”, “*semiconscious emotions*” and “*conscious rationality*” (p. xiv) which all combine to create meaning. This reflects a more psychological perspective with brand meaning being created over time from perceptual processes within the consumer’s mind (Ries and Trout 1986; Hatch and Schultz 2010).

Adopting more of a cultural perspective, Holt (2002) links brand meaning to a person’s socio-cultural experience or context. Ligas and Cotte (1999) not only recognise an individual environment but also that of a social environment too. The individual environment can reflect on the role of the self and how meanings are interpreted in relation to her own life within the cultural context surrounding her. The social environment is when a person negotiates meanings with those others around her, a theme also recognised by Escalas and Bettman (2005). Ligas and Cotte also note the symbolic characteristics of brands involved with interaction with others. Batey (2016) recognises both psychological, social and cultural perspectives when he suggests that brand meaning is a combination of a consumer’s ‘socio-psychological nature’ (p. x) and the cultures to which they belong.

Wilson et al. (2014) suggest that consumers ascribe both functional and psychological meanings to brands based on these needs. Reflecting the earlier dichotomous notions of functionality and symbolism as identified in brand definitions, Franzen and Bowman (2001) assert that:

*“Sometimes a brand meaning can emanate directly from directly from the functional product, and other times an abstract or symbolic meaning is linked to the brand with the help of communication”* (p.180)

Functionality is a theme recognised by Keller (2003a) who recognises that functionality comes from knowledge, and the factual objective essence of what a brand represents. Ligas and Cotte (1999) suggest that meaning is in addition to a product's utilitarian attributes however they articulate three components to meaning – a brand's physical properties, its functional attributes and its character or personality. Franzen and Bowman (2001) acknowledge that brand meaning exists on three levels, the lowest being the level of sensory and physical attributes, the next is the level of direct functional implications and finally the highest level being symbolic, implying there is a hierarchy within meaning structures. Franzen and Bowman (2001) extensively cite Hirschman's (1998) work given her earlier insights as to how tangible attributes and intangible associations may be organised. Hirschman's (1980; 1998) 'layers of meaning' reflect that the meaning of meaning can be anthropological, sociological or psychological in nature (Gould and Kolb 1964) and to further ground and understand brand meaning, it invites further understanding of the meaning of meaning.

### **2.1.3 Meaning of Meaning**

The roots of the meaning of meaning reveal they can be philosophical, anthropological, sociological or psychological in nature (Gould and Kolb, 1964). Whilst there have been some useful contributions to understanding meaning from a linguistic perspective including the philosophy of language (Iglesias and Bonet 2012), this approach further acknowledges the social sciences perspectives. This is reflected by Batey's (2008) assertion that it is a combination of a consumer's "*sociopsychological nature*" and the cultures to which she/he belongs help to create a 'reservoir' of meaning (p. xiv).

Distinctions can be drawn in relation to how meaning is perceived across the disciplines albeit there is some overlap. In their dictionary of social sciences, Gould and Kolb (1964) initially suggest that an object's meaning is how it relates to all other objects with which it is associated as seen through the lens of an individual's or group's experiences.

A philosophical approach to meaning takes a concept-referent relationship (Hirschman 1980) and arguably links to a linguistic perspective. The concept is a principle, or an idea, and the referent can be the thing, person or idea that a word or phrase refers to. This is essentially logical and rational in nature and meaning relates closely to factual or rational knowledge (Katz 1972). Anthropological and sociological meanings are more subjective

(Linton 1936), and relationship based and symbolic (Lindesmith and Strauss 1949). Psychological meaning further underpins the subjectivity and notes the affective reactions to stimuli (Szalay and Deese 1978 as cited by Hirschman 1980). There are parallels with assertions from Holbrook (1978) as he coins the term 'evaluative content' which is defined as "*emotional, subjective impressions of intangible aspects of the product*" (p.547).

Taking each of these subjective disciplines in turn, firstly anthropology is the holistic study of the human social construct which includes all aspects of a defined living social group (Young 2009). This includes the myths, rituals, symbols and value systems that are known as culture (Lannon 1999). An early definition of culture by Tylor (1884, p.145) reads:

*"Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society"*.

When exploring meaning from an anthropological perspective, Linton (1936) identifies the importance of associations that society attaches to an object when understanding its meaning and these associations are frequently unconscious, subjective and may only be expressed indirectly in behaviour. Linton also suggests that there can be multiple meanings, a point later supported by brand scholars Kates and Goh (2003) who refer to 'brand morphing'. This recognises that meanings can shift across different consumer groups and Eckhardt and Houston (2002) add that brands can adopt different cultural and societal connotations which affect their meaning. Lannon (1999) cites Weber (1948) who states that man [*sic*] lives in a web of meaning chosen by himself and suggests that the meanings we choose through our consumption of brands creates the ultimate study of culture.

Secondly, sociology whilst studying societies, inevitably overlaps with anthropology and culture. It has a relational and symbolic contribution to meaning. These elements are identified by sociologists Lindesmith and Strauss (1949) who assert that an object's meaning is a relationship that is determined by responses made to it. They suggest that meaning is a metaphysical notion that may be symbolic, a mental concept or evident within the object itself, the latter implying some physicality or functionality. Sherry (2005) recognises a brand's physical and metaphysical presence. In his parallel with a

Thai spirit house he alludes to both the physical temple with a metaphysical spirit. Mead (1934) notes that meaning can arise through gestures between individuals which suggests a relationship and has behaviour implications. This is a slight contrast with Sherry, who later in his article, notes that the physicality of the movement creating the gesture results in a more intangible meaning. The resultant gesture may be symbolic.

Thirdly, is the discipline of psychology which deals with the mind and its functions exploring how attitudes are formed and how they may subsequently affect behaviour. Psychological meaning concerns the subjective perception and affective reactions to stimuli (Szalay and Deese 1978, cited by Hirschman 1980). They assert that "*psychological meaning is suffused with affectivity*" (p.8) and some components are more central than others to psychological representation. Hirschman (1980) refers to this as 'idiosyncratic'; this is the emotional meaning that a product has for the individual consumer. She proposes that it is unique to the individual and their experiences therefore it varies across people and is not shared by others. Barnett (1953) implies that memory is important as he suggest that meaning emerges when a presented object can be referred to a past experience. This suggests a linear process where a brand may be referred to some past event which then gives it further insight and meaning. Brand scholars Braun-La-Tour et al. (2007) who research memory experiences suggest that they "*symbolize the consumer-brand relationship*" (p.45) which adds to the concept of meaning through memory and how these experiences may be symbolic.

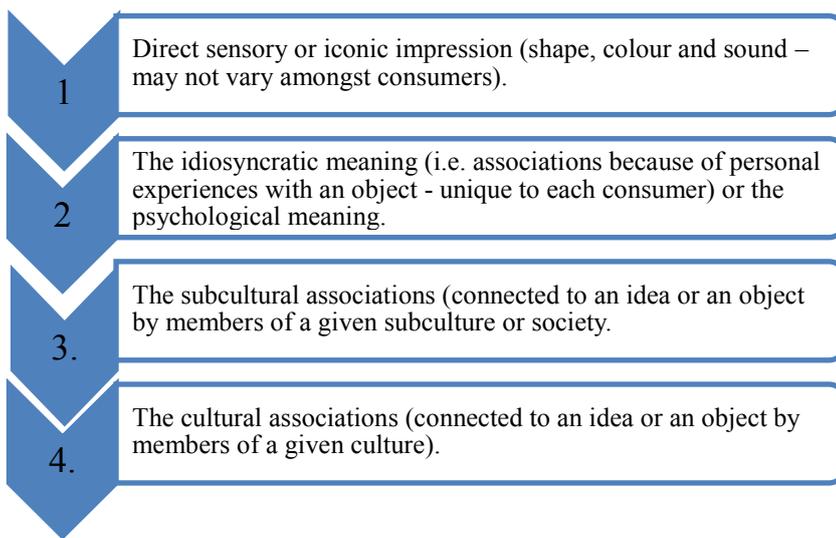
Ries and Trout (1986) state that our perceptions are invested with meaning and these may relate to our sense of self-worth. Self-concept is an important term for psychology when exploring meaning. Baumeister (1999) defines this as:

*"...the individual's belief about himself or herself, including the person's attributes and who and what the self is"* (p.13).

Reflecting both sociologists' and psychologists' views, McCracken (1988), Dittmar (1992) and Belk (1988) support the notion that individuals share in a process of transforming, transmitting and reproducing the social meanings of objects and consumption as a means of constructing and expressing identity.

In summary, the meaning of meaning reveals there are patterns of associations within an object's meaning. These associations may be influenced by a consumer's stimulated senses and gestures, any functionality of the object, personal past experiences, socially

shared meanings and their associated cultural meanings and attachments. Meaning is relational and emerges because of how these associations connect with one another. For example, the interpretation of gestures and other stimuli through the senses creating meaning and may affect a consumer's subsequent behaviour. This draws a parallel with Hirschman's (1998) layers - Direct Sensory, Idiosyncratic, Subcultural and Cultural and her framework, as shown in Figure Three, is a useful basis for understanding brand meaning.



*Figure Three: Layers of Meaning (Hirschman 1998)*

Whilst Hirschman relegates the direct sensory layer, she reflects the psychological (idiosyncratic), subcultural and cultural components of the meaning of meaning, with her numbering suggesting some sort of hierarchy, albeit this varies as she reflects over the years. Hirschman's (1980; 1998) work is important for this research as these layers of meaning reflect earlier scholars' assertions about anthropological, sociological and psychological meanings (Lindesmith and Strauss 1949; Linton 1936; Szalay and Deese 1978 as cited by Hirschman 1980). It is also important as it appears to be the first time that the terms 'tangible' and 'intangible' have been identified together and defined in the context of product marketing. The development of her work is discussed more fully in Section 2.1.5. The nature of tangible attributes and intangible associations will now be discussed and how they are perceived to be dichotomous.

#### **2.1.4 Dichotomy, attributes and associations**

Throughout this discussion scholars have alluded to a dichotomy of tangible attributes or intangible associations (e.g. Ambler and Styles 1996; De Chernatony et al. 2011; Reizebos 2003). Many brand definitions reflect this dichotomy within a brand's meaning. A dichotomy can be defined as a contrast or division between two elements that are represented as being opposite or entirely different. This dichotomous element within a brand definition can be traced back as far as 1958 when Martineau noted that a store can be defined by the consumer by its psychological *and* functional attributes. This dichotomy of tangible and intangible is also reflected by scholars such as Levy (1959), Bhat and Rheddy (1998) and Veloutsou and Moutinho (2008) who accept consumers buy goods not only for their utility but also for their symbolic meaning. Indeed, within the brand meaning literature, contributions from Morgan and Reichert (1999), Achenreiner and John (2003) and Martin et al. (2005) all allude to a dichotomy that is captured by Hirschman (1980) who states that:

*“...attributes may be dichotomised into tangible and intangible features which are associated with the stimulus” (p.9).*

Keller (1993) asserts that an attribute is a descriptive feature characterising a product or service. His intrinsic brand attributes are of specific interest to this study as they form the brand's essential ingredients and features that determine how it performs (Keller 1998). Initially Hirschman alludes to both tangible and intangible attributes but in a following conference paper, she uses the term 'associations' (Hirschman 1981). Citing Simon (1979) she refers to a “semantic net” of associations (p.31) held in memory which she contrasts against attributes describing the product. Associations are defined as a mental connection between things; Franzen and Bouwman (2001) determine that brand associations “are mental links between the brand name and the analogous representation and symbolic meanings” (p.178) in consumer's memories. Keller (2003b) identifies brand associations as nodes providing information to the brand node held within consumer memory which contains the brand meaning. However, Keller (1993) questions if associations are always relevant in purchase decisions and suggests that attributes occasionally have relevance. Brand associations may vary according to context; he cites Miller and Ginter (1979) asserting that in some situations, associations may be relevant but not in others. For example, when short of time, attributes of speed and efficiency of service are important, but this may differ when consumers have more time. In summary

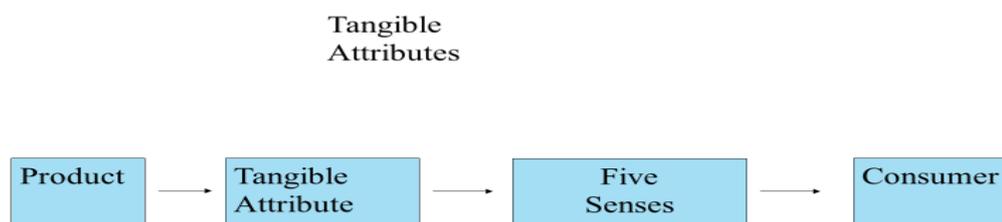
both attributes and associations contribute to brand meaning and this study defines attributes as tangible and associations as intangible.

### 2.1.5 Tangible Attributes

Whilst Hirschman's (1980) layers of meaning framework provide a useful starting point and future units of analysis relevant to this study, her definition of tangible attributes is revisited. This relates to her first layer which originated as 'Tangible Product Attributes' in 1980 (see Figure One) but evolved to 'Direct Sensory and Iconic' in 1998 (see Figure Three). It is argued here that tangible attributes are mentally detected by consumers through their senses as this data is cognitively processed. A new approach or definition for tangible attributes is developed. Hirschman (1980) defines tangibility:

*"Tangibility means that an attribute is accessible through the senses, it is palpable. ...it arises directly from the product and may be detected...through...the senses."* (p.9)

This contrasts with *"intangible attributes [which] exist only within the mind of the individual and are mentally rather than physically associated with the product"* (Hirschman 1980 p.9). Figure Four shows how Hirschman believes the attributes to function. A tangible attribute originates directly from the product and is detected through the consumer's senses. She insists tangible attributes are objective *"...because they exist independent of the mind"* (p.9). This objectivity is supported by Holbrook (1978) who noted at this time that tangible product features generate factual content that is 'logical' and *objectively verifiable*" (p. 547).



*Figure Four: Tangible Attributes (Hirschman; 1980, p.10)*

As Levitt (1981) suggests, tangibility can be directly experienced, tangible attributes of products can be tasted or touched, and you can check the functionality in terms of testing the controls of a machine, for example. Functional attributes can include price, size and ingredients (Sewall 1978 cited by Hirschman 1980). Hirschman (1980) determined that these are objective as they exist “*independent of the mind*” (p.9) and they generate data as detected by the senses - “*these “data driven” sensations consist of tangible product attributes (e.g. color, sounds, smells)*” (p.10). As such they can be easily measured.

She acknowledges however, they are simultaneously processed as the individual is “*supplying cognitive data to the perceptual process*” (p.12) to help recognition. She states that it is “*concept-driven processing*” (p.12) which is “*...drawn from the intangible attributes, from prior direct and vicarious experiences relevant to it*” (p.12). She continues to argue that this is a “*joint construct of the tangible objective product features*” (p.12) emanating from the stimulus and the intangible subjective features originating from the consumer. She notes that the latter may be “*merely descriptive*” (p.12) or affective. However, an issue with this interpretation is that tangible attributes are not objective, they are perceived by our senses and given our own subjective assessment of their colour, smell, etc. (Krishna 2012). They cannot remain the property of the object as they will get interpreted and have unique meanings for individuals; sensorial and functional attributes require attention regarding their contribution to brand meaning. Therefore, this study challenges Hirschman’s proposition that:

“*...objective (i.e. tangible) properties of the product stimulus are invariant across consumers, because they arise from the stimulus, itself, and not from individual experiences with it*” (p.12).

This is also later challenged by Krishna (2012) in Section 2.2.2 and Rossing et al. (2002) in section 2.2.8.

Hirschman continues to propose that “*the “meaning” of a product stimulus is a mixture of objective properties and subjective associations*” (p.12). Arguably a better proposition is that the meaning of a product or brand can be a combination of tangible attributes and intangible associations. Meaning may be simple and straight-forward emanating from tangible attributes or more elaborate with connections to intangible associations.

Hirschman refers to cognitive association, so it is useful to explore cognition a little further. Cognition refers to knowledge, which is everything we have acquired through

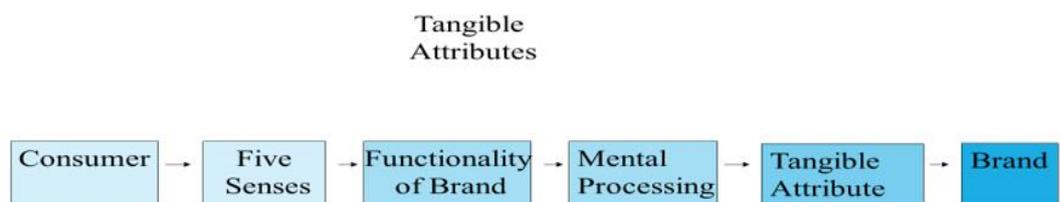
experience or have learned. We perceive information through our senses which is subjectively integrated and evaluated to help interpret our world (Wadsworth 1996). Cognition can be defined as a mental process by which external or internal input is transformed, reduced, elaborated, stored, recovered, and used (Neisser 1967). This involves a variety of functions such as “*perception, attention, memory coding, retention, and recall, decision making, reasoning, problem-solving, imaging, planning and executing actions*” (Brandimonte et al. 2006, p.13) all of which are mental processes, and this is converted into knowledge. Franzen and Bouwman recognise direct (analogous) representations of sensory sensations and propositional representations which are abstract, non-sensory and perceptible meanings interpreted from sensory experiences. They also recognise language used to express brand experiences that can be an analogous representation albeit it is limited to that language stored in our memory. Therefore, both the direct tangible attributes including the senses, together with the intangible associations i.e. propositional representations, can create cognitive associations or, more simply, be mentally processed.

David Lodge with reference to Roland Barthes (1970) argues that nothing is ever just referential, and everything connotes something (Lodge 2015). Meanings are mental constructs and not properties of things, even if they seem otherwise (Iglesias and Bonet 2012). This removes the ability to process anything objectively as we always refer to something from prior and vicarious experiences; therefore, it may not be useful to create a separate data-driven and concept-driven divide.

Brand meaning can emanate from the product function and at other times there is more of a symbolic or abstract meaning (Franzen and Bouwman 2001). Hirschman acknowledges that tangible attributes can affect meaning when she says that “...*meaning of one type of product may be largely dominated by its tangible properties*” (p.11). In 1980 Hirschman refers to a layer of ‘tangible product attributes’, but later in 1998 this layer is referred to as the ‘*direct sensory or iconic impression (shape, colour and sound that may not vary amongst consumers)*’ (see Figure Three). There is little explanation or reasoning for the word ‘iconic’. Sherry (2005) offers some potential insight here. He refers to brand iconography, which he claims is “*an immediate source of meaning*” with the requirement to ‘tangibilize’ (p.54). He asserts that the more senses that are engaged with the brand, the more tangible it is for the consumer, so the brand becomes palpable. Barden (2013) identifies tangibility as key to triggering heuristics; there must be

perceptible and tangible signals. Sherry similarly connects the “*physical with the metaphysical*” (p.42) and then goes further by asserting that the material world and our connections with it, is an extension of our sense of self - “*Things literally shape our ability to think*” (p.43). Sherry’s iconography, with its requirement to tangibilize, is therefore a first step in generating brand meaning.

Tangible attributes include the physical perceptible dimensions and the functional characteristics (e.g. performance potential). Thus, Hirschman’s definition of tangible attributes can be evolved (see Figure Four) to reflect this which recognises the contribution of the senses and their detection of the brand functionality. This is mentally processed to facilitate this ‘tangibilization’. In other words, the consumer detects the stimulus through the senses from the brand and how it functions, mentally processes the stimulus and registers this as a tangible attribute that is physically associated with the brand. This is shown by Figure Five.



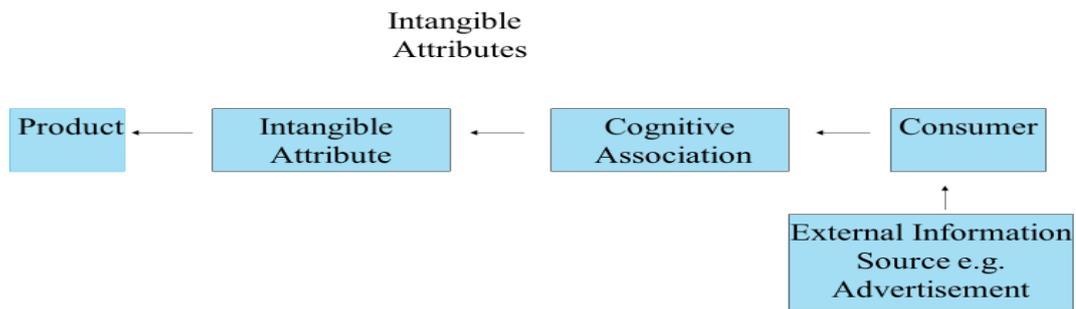
*Figure Five: Tangible Attributes adapted from Hirschman (1980)*

### **2.1.6 Intangible Associations**

In a similar manner to critiquing Hirschman’s tangible attributes, now her approach to intangible associations is reviewed. These relate to her idiosyncratic, subcultural and cultural layers (see Figures One and Three). It is argued that both tangible attributes and intangible associations are mentally detected by consumers though their senses as this data is cognitively processed. A new definition for intangible associations is developed.

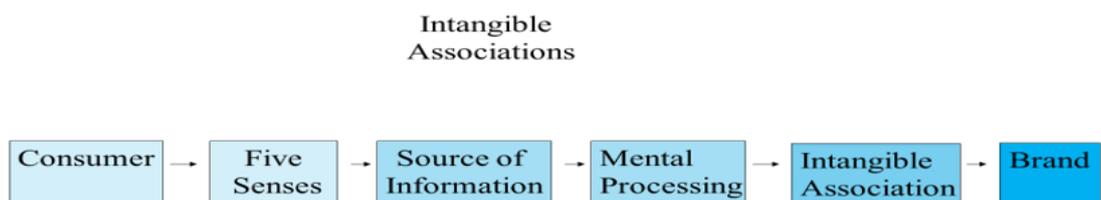
In her 1980 paper Hirschman had yet to alter her ‘attribute’ description to ‘associations’ which she did later the following year (1981). Originally, she defined intangible attributes as existing in an individual’s mind and being mentally rather than physically associated with the product. They are subjective, as later supported by Dacin and Brown (2002) who

also assert that the intangible associations are the feelings and beliefs of consumers. They emanate from a consumer's mind to a brand (Batey 2008). Hirschman notes they arise from the person who is observing them rather than the object itself. Intangible associations are therefore created as follows. A source of external information stimulates the process e.g. a newspaper advertisement. This stimulus is detected by the consumer through observation and cognitively processed to create an intangible association which is then connected with the product or brand. This is shown in Figure Six.



*Figure Six: Intangible Attributes (Hirschman, 1980 p.10)*

Whilst Hirschman uses the term ‘observing’, a better verb is sensing; Figure Seven adjusts Hirschman’s approach, recognising that any source must be detected by the consumer’s senses, and this can include an external advertisement or a brand’s packaging. This is mentally processed to create an intangible association for the brand.



*Figure Seven: Intangible Associations adapted from Hirschman (1980)*

The nature of how we connote both tangible attributes and intangible associations has been established on an individual basis. In both instances, the senses perceive the stimulus and mentally process this into either a tangible or intangible concept.

The discussion now turns to dealing with the sensorial aspects and relevant literature in relation to brand meaning.

## **2.2 Section Two: The Senses**

Senses are instrumental in both determining tangible and intangible attributes and associations (see Figures Five and Seven). Hirschman (1980) argues that tangible attributes can be “*seen, touched, heard, tasted or smelled*” (p.9) but an external information source which influences the consumer, exemplified by an advertisement, linked to her intangible attributes diagram (see Figure Six), must be seen and/or heard. A smell emanating from the product can trigger intangible associations such as memories, stories or rituals, all of which will be viewed, heard or experienced.

There has been a great deal of recent interest in sensorial marketing. This section captures the current thinking in this domain which has largely been to embrace the hedonic multisensory or ‘efferent’ approach as originally espoused by Hirschman and Holbrook in 1982. This contrasts with the ‘afferent’ position (ibid) which relates to a more ‘direct sensory’ stance (Hirschman 1998). Scholars such as Krishna (2012), Spence (2012) and Hultén (2011) have developed this area with Hultén reinforcing the earlier approach of Hirschman and Holbrook. This section reviews and acknowledges their contributions whilst being curious about any senses adopting an ‘afferent’ position.

### **2.2.1 Afferent, Efferent and Multisensory**

The section begins by defining appropriate terms such as ‘afferent’, ‘efferent’ and ‘multisensory’ and these are discussed in relation to creating brand meaning. It then moves to discussing sensory congruity. To help with understanding notions of senses creating meaning individually, or if there is inseparability with other senses or further intangible associations, each sense will now be discussed to understand its properties further. Taste is clearly important given it is so relevant in the context of local food brands and there is much evidence to suggest that it is connected and congruous with the other senses. The remaining senses are discussed with relevance to the context and there are some issues regarding cross-modularity across the senses worthy of discussion.

Hirschman (1980) suggests that “*one or more of the five senses*” can detect a stimulus (p.9). Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) coin the term ‘afferent’ which literally means something that is directed towards a nerve or organ, but they used it in parallel with a direct sensory experience such as a product taste test. ‘Direct sensory’ may also need more explanation as to what this might mean to consumers. Hirschman (1980) initially assumed that this was ‘objective’ but it has already been established that everything connotes something, and a simple taste therefore resonates and has meaning for consumers, for example it may taste of umami – a term meaning ‘deliciousness’ or ‘savoury’ (Lindemann et al. 2002). Groome et al. (2006) make a helpful distinction between sensory impressions and perception. Sensory impression is referred to as raw-material received from the sensory organs whereas perception is the subjective or idiosyncratic experience of the sensory impressions. It is of interest as to whether the perception created is a simple functional or sensorial experience for example being ‘tasty’ or ‘tasting good’, which is afferent, or, a multisensory, hedonic experience which is efferent (Hirschman and Holbrook 1982).

Efferent literally means to head away from a nerve or organ but Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) develop this to be a multisensory experience which occurs when we perceive more than one of our human senses during a consumption experience. It creates an experience for customers to enable them to have fun, live out fantasies and have feelings (Rodrigues 2018). Hirschman and Holbrook explain that this multisensory experience involves receiving sounds, tastes, smells and tactile impressions through many sensory modalities which can be hedonic, exemplified by a perfume generating multisensory experiences after the initial perception and encoding of its scent. This contrasts with an afferent experience such as a simple tasting experience. Hultén (2011) defines a multisensory experience as:

*“a multisensory brand-experience supports individual value creation and refers to how individuals react when a firm interacts and supports their purchase and consumption processes through the involvement of the five human senses in generating customer value, experiences, and brand as image”* (p.259).

Sternburg and Baker (2005) assert consumers describe their relationships with brands in a “*polysensory*” (p.44) capacity. They suggest that a strong relationship with a brand is driven by smell, touch, taste, feel, appearance, sound and great design. They give the following examples (p.44) from France and Japan.

*“Ah the sound when I open my L'Oréal Gloss. A mixture of squeak and zip. The smell! You could eat it.”*

*“I like the quiet and dignified sound while this whisky [Nikka] that glows like gold is poured into the glass.”*

This adds to the brand experience which can be defined as:

*“Subjective, internal consumer responses (sensations, feelings, and cognitions) and behavioural responses evoked by brand related stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications and environments”*  
(Brakus et al. 2009, p.53).

Moreover, sensory elements appear in Keller's (2003a) experiential benefits that include what it feels like to use the brand relating to sensory pleasure, cognitive stimulation and variety. Multisensory experiences deepen and confirm the reality of the experience and Hirschman (1998) supports this when she replays a song in her head and identifies all the senses evoked from the experience – how she feels the warmth of summer, the scratch of her boyfriend's face, the smell of beer – all of which blend together to create a memory. It is very personal and idiosyncratic and shows linkage between her first and second layer of meaning.

Hultén (2011) falls into a more efferent and hedonic perspective particularly as he asserts that brands can adopt sensorial strategies for differentiation purposes and are based more on *“emotional/psychological elements than functional attributes”* (p. 264) to help clarify brand values and identity. In this context, Hultén identifies price and quality to be linked with functionality but not function or performance, albeit they are detected by the senses to appreciate what the product or service does and how it performs. Whilst this may not necessarily be a distinguishing or differentiating element it is important that the brand functions for the consumer. Hultén is aware of the importance of all the associations as he previously cited Anselm and Kosteljik (2008) in that it does not matter whether the associations referred to are tangible or emotional/symbolic or both. Indeed, Hultén acknowledges the functionality of using smell as a sense and gives an example of Volvo creating an attractive smell for their new cars. This is functional as the new smell masks the previous plastic smell and ensures there is a suitable allergenic environment. He gives an example of Nokia, who have designed their phones with *“soft values in mind”* (p.266)

and have big screens and soft buttons. The screen is easier to see, and the buttons are easier to use, and this offers greater functionality as well as underpinning the ‘soft values’.

His example of Wholefoods, a sophisticated US brand, cannot go without note particularly in this research’s context of local foods. This US retailer has deliberately employed sensorial strategies to demonstrate an efferent, hedonistic experience. It is a sharp contrast to the context for this research which is far less sophisticated and interfaces with consumers rather than brand owners. Hultén’s rich descriptive account of Wholefoods’ multisensory strategy encompasses smell, sound, sight, taste and tactile sensations and can be found in Appendix Three. The passage illustrates the retailer’s desire to achieve congruity across the senses. There are many other high street brands employing multisensory marketing strategies with the aim of achieving congruity. Calvert and Pathak (2015) cite Starbucks, Diageo brands Guinness and Johnnie Walker and Heston Blumenthal who are advocates of this approach.

### **2.2.2 Sensory Congruency**

Sensory congruency is defined as a:

*“...tendency for a feature, or attribute, in one sensory modality to be matched (or associated) with a sensory feature, or attribute in another sensory modality”*  
(Spence 2012, p.37).

The notion of association of sensory modalities draws comparison with the meaning of meaning. It has already been established that we create patterns of associations connecting with objects, and our senses are instrumental in delivering raw-material received from the sensory organs and fueling our perception which is the subjective or idiosyncratic experience of the sensory impressions (Groome et al. 2006). Meaning further develops from our own pattern of associations drawn from cultural and socially shared meanings together with our own personal past experiences and perceptions. This raises the question as to whether sensory congruity assists clarity of meaning or if senses are incongruous, and if this alters meaning in any way.

The following section reviews literature that argues that it is beneficial to match features or attributes as detected by different senses so there is congruity and harmony. Sensory congruency is argued to be desirable by Wansink et al. (2005) and Yeomans et al. (2008).

They demonstrate that congruent combinations of description and taste result in more favourable evaluations as expectations formed through descriptions of food have been shown to influence the actual evaluation of food strongly. Spence (2012) illustrates how brand owners can set up congruity across the senses by drawing upon the packaging shape including the shape of its label and the sound of the brand name across various food and beverage brands. Other scholars, the majority using quantitative methods, support that the reinforcement of brand cues from other senses intensify the experience for consumers (e.g. Elder and Krishna 2010; Becker et al. 2011; Piqueras-Fiszman and Spence, 2012). As demonstrated by Hultén's (2011) Wholefoods example, Calvert and Pathak (2015) determine that the combination of more senses in congruence with one another is greater than the sum of the individual senses, as they suggest that the brain is very good at categorising an attention seeking multisensory experience as a single integrated phenomenon. They recommend that clashes across the senses be avoided. Negative experiences should be similarly avoided. Mintel (2013) however reports that consumers will forgo perfect-looking specimens and are willing to buy misshapen British fruit and vegetables grown in Britain. Spence (2012) nonetheless, asserts that if our expectations are not met, we evaluate a food or beverage negatively immediately and for a long time, more so than if our expectations had been met.

Stach (2015) draws upon a brand's kernel traits (Kapferer 2012). He asserts that they are both tangible and intangible and are the source of the brand's meaning. The tangible kernel traits are of interest as they transmit the brand's identity through the senses. Here he refers to Kapferer's brand identity prism, albeit facets such as culture, relationship, personality, self-image and self-reflection encompass many intangible meanings which can be included. As well as focusing on brand identity, brand image is also aligned to brand meaning which includes the consumers' experiences of the brand promises (Veloutsou and Moutinho 2009).

Keeping with his identity position, Stach (2015) argues that a multisensory approach is better than just using a single sense to depict the brand identity or as he terms it a unisensory approach. He considers a unisensory evaluation insufficient as whilst it may fit one aspect of the brand identity, when it interacts with another sensory modality of the brand, meaning is likely to change. To illustrate he cites the Crystal Pepsi example where incongruity was introduced across the senses. Here the introduction of a different colour liquid (clear) was incongruous to previous learning as the category expected colour was

black and this proved to have negative effects for the brand. He also cites the unsuccessful New Coke brand where taste was changed in reaction to the Pepsi Challenge. Cardello and Sawyer (1992) support this as they suggest there can be unfavourable product reactions if the taste diverges from the expectation gained from the visual appearance of the product.

Stach (2015) argues that multisensory engagement with a brand creates a more intense reaction from the consumer than an activation with only one sense, and this is well-supported by an overview of quantitative studies on congruency effects with associated networks. Incongruent combinations can lead to misinterpretations and creating a phenomenon called the 'McGurk-Effect' from McGurk and MacDonald (1976) cited by Stach. Nonetheless, Stach recognises that consumers can accept a moderate level of incongruence, with more peripheral cues, as they stimulate mental processing and improve brand evaluations. This is exemplified by Google who frequently changes its website logo. This is not total disruption as the name stays constant – only the design changes which is peripheral. Krishna (2012) notes there is an opportunity for more research in sensory conflict which can be interpreted as discrepancies across the senses and she cites Piaget's 'centration hypothesis' (1968) which is when taller objects appear to contain greater volume than shorter ones.

Before the discussion closes on efferent, multisensory and congruent sensorial strategies, it is noted that consumers can selectively screen out stimuli through selective perception which limits information (Gabbott and Hogg 1998). Some individuals might not be aware of a noise in the background whilst others pick up on visual cues in the environment, so individuals behave differently or more idiosyncratically. Krishna (2012) calls for more research regarding how one person's sensory reality may compare to another's, particularly as many perceive their sensory perception to be more objective than others. This can explore if the five senses operate in the same way across every individual, either individually or in a multisensory capacity. Changes in our emotional state can affect individual perceptions and more attention is paid to any emotional connections with specific tastes, colours or sounds. This contrasts with Hirschman's stance that direct sensory impressions, consisting of shape, colour and sound do not vary amongst consumers.

To help with understanding if senses can achieve meaning individually, or if there is inseparability with either other senses, or further intangible associations such as triggering memories, each sense will now be discussed to understand its properties further.

### **2.2.3 Individual Sense: Taste**

The taste of food is an integral part of life. The consumption of food is an important ritual, and social interaction happens around a table. In her review of the sensory literature, Krishna (2012) reminds us that there are five separate cellular and biochemical reactions to taste - or five pure tastes - sweet, salty, sour, bitter and umami. Japanese researchers discovered the latter and this savoury or 'delicious' taste refers to the taste of pure protein or from monosodium glutamate (Live Science 2016). To take a more scientific viewpoint umami can be defined as the taste of salts combining, inosinate, glutamate or guanylate together with sodium ions, such as or potassium ions or, as previously mentioned, monosodium glutamate (Umami Information Center 2019).

Whilst it may be assumed that each sense operates in its separate sphere, there has been increasing recognition that each sense may be modulated by other sensory pathways (Calvert et al. 2004). Given there are a limited number of distinct tastes, we use several senses to evaluate our tasting experiences with food (Krishna 2012; Spence 2012) so it is through using a combination of the senses that we assess our food. We distinguish amongst foods by evaluating their visual or aesthetic appeal, the sound (crunch) when eaten, how they smell, the textures and consistencies within our mouths and the temperature. Krishna (2012) observes that this multisensory assessment can take place with great sophistication. Many cross-modal associations influencing food perception and evaluation have been highlighted and scholars note the importance of more than one sense impacting upon our taste evaluations. These include the shape of the label and the shape of the product (Spence et al. 2013), the shape of the packaging and colour (Becker et al. 2011), shape and flavour (Delroy and Valentin 2011) the description of the ingredients (Lee et al. 2006), the description of the product (Wansink et al. 2005; Yeomans et al. 2008; Krishna 2012), the sound of the brand name (Allison and Uhl 1964; Leclerc et al. 1994) and colour and flavour (DuBose et al. 1980; Hoegg and Alba 2007; Zampini et al. 2007; Piqueras-Fiszman et al. 2012). Spence (2012) has mapped flavours with different speech and music sounds. There have been many quantitative studies assessing the sensorial factors (Krishna 2012; Stach 2015) and it is of specific interest to this

research how consumers might encounter taste using all their senses in a qualitative setting.

#### **2.2.4 Individual Sense: Sight**

Sight is the most significant and dominant sense (Schiffman 2001; Gains 2014). Consumers place great reliance on visible and tangible cues that attract and draw attention (Ward et al. 1992). How we detect and recognise objects is dependent on how we detect colour, texture and different motions around us (Forrester et al. 2008). Colour provides a broad range of visual dimensions, often contrasting colours enabling objects to stand out (Schiffman 2001). Further, Gorn et al. (1997) explain that people's feelings can be influenced by colour following on from earlier work in 1993 where mood was suggested to be linked to positive feelings (albeit more linked to sound) which assist in affecting consumers' evaluative judgments. Consumers can use mood to help simplify more complicated judgements bringing in the 'how do I feel about it?' heuristic (Gorn et al. 1993). Consumers are influenced by the visual stimuli of colour which can affect their evaluation and their engagement (Babin et al. 2003). This can happen with taste; white relates to a salty taste, red and orange are sweet, green and yellow are sour (Lindstrom 2005). Percy (1973) found that orange sauces were perceived to be milder than darker colours such as red and dark brown, the latter being associated with being spicier. Later vision and taste research conducted by Hoegg and Alba (2007) shows that the colour of orange juice can be more influential with the perception of taste than the actual taste itself.

Our perception of colour is influenced by how light is reflected from the object to our eye, but it is also influenced by our previous experiences and this is referred to as memory colours (Schiffman 2001). Our ability to discern textures and patterns can be enhanced through colour allowing us to detect different characteristics of the surface (ibid) which may be not only relating to the product but also its packaging. Similarly, our perceptions of shape may relate to both product and packaging.

#### **2.2.5 Individual Sense: Shape**

Brand shape is important as illustrated by VW's Beetle and Kraft's Toblerone. With reference to food or specifically cheese, Spence et al. (2013) researched the angularity of the packaging and shape of cheese products finding connections to the sharpness of taste.

They found that when thinking of cheddar cheese as sold in a supermarket you tend to think of a rectangular block. This suggests drawing on previous learning experiences. They argue that there is a cross-modal correspondence to a sharp taste or flavour and a rectangular shape, and milder cheeses should be presented in a more rounded form. Spence and Gallace (2011) have demonstrated that people tend to associate sparkling water with more angular shapes, and still water with more rounded shapes citing Chandrasekhar et al. (2009).

Linking shape and touch, Krishna (2012) notes that vision is more dominant, stating many studies have shown this and she cites Kinney and Luria's (1970) demonstration of divers matching the size of circular disks with remembered coins. They selected disks that were smaller than the coins even when the divers could feel the disks. Krishna (2012) argues there are further research opportunities in this area of sensory conflict particularly across shape, vision and size.

#### **2.2.6 Individual Sense: Haptics**

This relates to the sense of touch. Touch is the first sense we develop and the last sense we lose with age (Krishna 2012). Touch can be an important selling point and Barden (2013) asserts that the longer a person touches a product, the more likely they are to purchase. Spence and Gallace (2011) argue that a product's tactile attributes form a key part of our expectations of objects used regularly. Extending beyond food momentarily, the Kleenex tissues range has created key functional values such as softness and strength all relating to touch. Studies in relation to food and drink are limited but Williams and Bargh (2008) experiment with giving warm and cold coffee cups to hold whilst judging a person's personality. Warmer coffee cups equated to a warmer, more generous person and in this context, respondents were more likely to buy gifts for others rather than treat themselves. Evidently it is the same part of the brain that is activated for physical warmth as for interpersonal warmth. Schifferstein (2009) notes the warmth of a cup and the warmth of its content noting the congruency, in that the container warmth increased the perceived warmth of the content. Cups and containers are forms of packaging and this area deserves a little more attention.

### **2.2.6.1 Haptic and Packaging**

There are some good examples of packaging and its textures within the food industry. A local example is that of Dorset Cereal that relaunched its brand primarily focusing on new packaging, printing on the rougher textured reverse side of the cardboard to achieve a more appropriate textured feel, reflecting the nature of the cereal product. This acknowledges that more consumers like to interact on a haptic basis with their brands. Another very different example cited by Spence and Gallace (2011) are Apple products and the innovative packaging design reflects the innovativeness of the brand. They comment that a combination of vision and touch facilitate a consumer's likelihood to purchase and brands that have an appropriate tactile feel are more likely to be handled and purchased. Krishna and Morrin (2008) found that packaging or drinks containers could enhance the flavour of drinks. Spence (2012) relates the incident when he saw an envelope that gave the appearance of a regular vellum envelope yet, when touched, felt like animal skin. He can recall this memory from some years ago and comments upon the incongruity but suggests caution in using this approach.

### **2.2.7 Individual Sense: Smell**

In contrast to there being five pure tastes, we can recognise literally millions of different smells (Williams 2014). Lindstrom (2005) connects smell with memory which has some important psychological associations for consumer brand meaning (Zaltman 2003; Braun-La-Tour et al. 2007). The smell of new baked bread may trigger a significant childhood memory, or arguably it may simply connote freshly baked bread. The brain processes smell differently to other senses and it can have a significant effect on triggering emotional memories that can affect our behaviour (Winter 1976; Willander and Larsson 2006; Yeshurun et al. 2009; Low 2013). Smell is processed in the limbic system which is one of the most primitive parts of the brain where we immediately and instinctively experience emotion which explains why we need to flee when smelling fire.

Memories triggered by the sense of smell are earlier than that of sight or sound and smell can help the brain to travel back in time (Willander and Larsson 2006). Yeshurun et al. (2009) theorise that smell can aid recall to early memories of childhood because the brain captures specific activity patterns on the first occasion that we connect a smell with a particular object. Such pairings are therefore most likely to be laid down in childhood.

This sense, unlike others, has a direct connection to memory; however, there is very little research connecting other senses such as taste to memory (Krishna 2012).

The sense of smell is considered to be one of our most emotional senses and it assists with the process of nostalgia which is defined as “*a longing for a sense of both a time and a place anchored in the biological past*” (Waskul et al. 2009 p.15). They comment how odours can create reminiscences of places and people. Nostalgia can be deeper than just a fond memory and it connects our past and present, thus shaping the construction of one’s identity (Davies 1979; Wilson 2005). Low (2013) found that his participants related an odour to a specific person in their past, and that odour became a distinct signifier within their social interactions in their present. So, for example, an alcohol smell may trigger negative associations and connotations recalled from having an alcoholic father.

In a less disturbing context, smell can be used as a powerful brand trigger as exemplified by Singapore Airlines who produce a unique exotic Asian feminine perfume which is worn by the hostesses, squirted into the cabin atmosphere and blended into the hot towels. This sensorial brand component evokes strong memories when reminder cues are placed, recalling a past meaningful experience of the Singapore Airline journey (Lindstrom 2005).

### **2.2.8 Individual Sense: Sound**

Montagu (1986) asserts that our sense of sound is vital for learning and communication and can provide us with warning signals from a variety of directions. Our hearing range extends to more than nine octaves (Rossing et al. 2002) which is remarkable, but we cannot turn off the sounds around us, so we have to live symbiotically with them (Hultén 2011). Sound is experienced on a highly individual level and we respond differently to the same sounds (Rossing et al. 2002).

Sound is argued by Latasha et al. (2016) to significantly affect our moods and influence our buying or consumption habits. However, Pentz and Gerber (2013) state that our perception through hearing is of secondary importance when compared to sight but it can create an important association within our memory. Sound can complement taste exemplified by Kellogg’s trademarking the sound of Rice Krispies cereal (‘snap, crackle and pop’) and the crunch of their cornflakes. Latasha et al. (2016) suggest this aids consumer familiarity with the brand and interpret it as a sign of quality. It is not only

audible but tactile and its physical presence connects with taste and creates a specific positive meaning for Kelloggs and its consumers through its unique tangible attributes (Lindstrom 2005). Similarly, Walker's connected "crunch" with its crisps and stated that its crisps were the crunchiest and noisiest (Sternburg and Baker 2005). This is further underpinned by de Liz Pocztaruk et al. (2011) who found that the perceived crispiness of biscuits was significantly influenced through auditory, but not through visual information.

Sound and perceived taste have been researched by Yorkston and Menon (2004). Brand names contain individual sounds called phonemes and they investigate the phonetic meaning through sound symbolism. This is evaluated on an attribute level and they demonstrate that sound symbolism affected the attributes of creaminess, sweetness, and richness to specific properties of ice cream. They suggest that a successful brand name depends on creating a name congruent with the product category and one that fits the positioning of the brand within that product category.

To summarise this sensorial section, the terms 'afferent' and 'efferent' or 'multisensory' have been discussed and many scholars (e.g. Hirschman and Holbrook 1982; Hultén 2011) support that multisensory experiences can strengthen the reality of the brand experience. Congruent combinations of description and taste result in more favourable evaluations (Wansink et al. 2005; Yeomans et al. 2008) and Spence (2012) argues that it is desirable for brand owners to have congruity across the senses, for example with packaging shapes and sounds. Indeed, the reinforcement of brand cues from other senses intensify the experience for consumers (e.g. Piqueras-Fiszman and Spence 2012; Elder and Krishna 2010; Becker et al. 2011). However, Stach (2015) recognises that incongruence is accepted by consumers and Krishna (2012) calls more research in sensory conflict. Moreover, senses may also serve as a root to other meanings such as smell evoking a memory demonstrating semantic connections between the tangible attributes and the intangible associations.

Having now dealt with the sensory literature, this review turns to discussing literature concerned with the functional attributes.

### 2.3 Section Three: Functional Attributes

This section will review the literature on functionality. It will firstly establish functionality as an essential constituent of the brand as reflected in many brand definitions. The connection between the product element of the brand and functionality will be discussed and then the review will demonstrate how functionality contributes to the tangible properties of a brand and this will be underpinned by revisiting Hirschman's treatment of functionality including the senses. This helps to unveil typical functional attributes including price, size, ingredients and performance. The discussion then focuses on local food functional attributes include supporting the local economy, particularly local farmers, producers and growers, animal welfare, provenance, health, environment, freshness and taste, food safety, price and labelling. Next, this section explores functional attributes and involvement in consumer decision making and finally functionality's contribution to brand meaning is discussed.

Functionality is recognised in many brand definitions (e.g. Jevons 2008) and is a key element of the brand, often opposing 'emotional' or 'symbolic' in a dichotomous context. For example, De Chernatony et al. (2011) describe a brand to be a "*cluster of functional and emotional values*" (p.31). Bhat and Rheddy discuss the functional and symbolic positioning of brands in their 1998 paper. Functionality may be defined as exhibiting traits that serve a purpose well; practicality. A functional attribute is a key component of a brand and tends to be aligned with the attributes of a brand, with attribute meaning a characteristic or an inherent part of something.

There is a connection between the product element of the brand and its functionality. The word 'product' appears in many brand definitions (e.g. de Chernatony and McDonald 2003; Doyle 2002), and Farquhar (1989) suggests that a product is something that "*offers a functional benefit*" (p.24). When developing his definition of a brand, Kapferer (2012) states that brands cannot exist without the products (or services) to carry them. He suggests that without the product, the brand cannot become real. He acknowledges that the brand's mental associations are all connected, and these are a combination of functional and emotional attributes and associations. His functional attributes include the brand territory which consists of typical products, services, knowledge, quality and benefits. His emotional associations include brand personality and brand imagery and associations such as "pull-power" (p.9) due to the emotional relationship developed. There is, however, a need for being more precise and further defining tangible attributes

and intangible associations (see Section One). Kapferer criticises Keller for imprecision and failing to disentangle the product from the brand in his 1998 brand definition (specific words here have been emboldened for emphasis):

*“A brand is a **product** that adds other dimensions to differentiate it in some way from other products designed to satisfy the same need”.* (Keller 1998 cited by Kapferer 2012, p.11)

Kapferer’s remedy in his (2012) definition is as follows where he attempts to demarcate the brand from the product further and states that a brand is (and again specific words are emboldened for emphasis):

*“...a name that symbolises a long-term engagement, crusade or commitment to a unique set of values, **embedded into** products, services and behaviours, which make the organisation, person or product stand apart or stand out”* (p.12).

Franzen and Holzhauser (1987) cited by Franzen and Bouwman (2001) assist by offering that the brand is far more complex than just the tangible product; it is made up also of emotions, associations and a “*fleeting whole*” (p.144). Indeed, functional brands are those that possess some tangible characteristics that offer benefits to consumers (Park et al. 1986; Fournier 1991; Bhat and Reddy 1998) or can perform specific jobs based on properties such as their physical characteristics and features (Fournier 1991). Some scholars take a very specific view of functional brands which they determine as those that have poor positioning and base their offer on rational arguments of good value for money or adequate quality (e.g. Steenkamp 2016). These may be exemplified by low-priced brands or own label store brands (Kumar and Steenkamp 2007) and appeal to consumers with low incomes (Llonch-Andreu et al. 2016). However, this is a narrow viewpoint and, as already supported by Park et al. (1986) Fournier (1991) and Bhat and Reddy (1998), the functional attributes of brands have much wider appeal.

The tangible, product performance benefits are rationally assessed by consumers to satisfy their practical needs (Bhat and Reddy 1998; Mowle and Merrilees 2005). Brands can therefore provide a functional solution to solving externally generated problems (Park et al. 1986; Fournier 1991) and Elliott and Percy (2007) exemplify this by using the Ronseal ad “*It does exactly what it says on the tin*” (p.4). The functional role that brands can perform is widely acknowledged (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton 1981; Holbrook and Hirschman 1982; Park et al. 1986).

### 2.3.1 Typical Functional Attributes

As already established, tangible attributes include both sensorial and functional components. Functionality is experienced through the senses and is included within an evolved understanding of tangible attributes (see Figure Five in section 2.1.5). The functional characteristics can be further elaborated upon regarding how they work in collaboration with the senses and Hultén (2011) acknowledges how the senses of smell, sight and touch facilitate functionality with earlier illustrations from Volvo and Nokia (see Section Two). Hirschman (1980) recognises that functionality has a role to play in her first layer of brand meaning that is tangible product attributes. She cites Sewall (1978) who identifies products with typical functional attributes including price, size and ingredients. These are later developed in 1986 where she asserts that tangible can refer to “*chemical composition, size, weight, color, density, height, length, etc.*” when referring to the “*objectively verifiable*” (p.328) product elements. The term utilitarian is linked with functionality as she explains:

*“By 'utilitarian' is meant products used to achieve functional, extrinsic objectives (e.g., relief of headache pain)” (p.327).*

This also suggests a rational solution to a problem dealing with an objective that is solved from external sources rather than being innate. In 1990 Hirschman offers more examples of functional products that “*allowed consumers to conduct their daily affairs*” (p.219) and these have a performance or utility value.

*“My car provides instant mobility”*

*“My air conditioner, otherwise I would die in summer from the humidity”*

*“My glasses because I see poorly without them” (p.220)*

Fournier (1991) supports Hirschman by offering similar examples of utilitarian products such as can openers, air conditioners and blankets providing a solution through their use or performance to an externally generated problem. Keller (2012), however, places the performance element at the centre of a brand’s meaning as this is the root of consumer engagement. He refers to Nike and Apple, arguing these brands would not enjoy high consumer loyalty if technological innovation, coupled with simple easy to use solutions, were not core values.

Functionality can relate to ‘use-value’, a concept introduced by Marx in 1930. It describes the utilitarian value of the functional or material operation that a product performs. More recently Bardhi et al. (2012) recognise use-value as “*the instrumental functionality that an object possesses*” (p.520). They highlight its significance in contrast with symbolic value that has been the focus of a great deal of consumer research. They cite Baudrillard (1981) to explain that functionality and use-value can be part of reflexive identity processes in consumer culture. This is evidenced through the narratives of their respondents who are global nomads. These refer to “*objects valued for their instrumental use-value (e.g., survival, orientation, safety, health, etc.)*” (p.520). They give examples of functional foods, in this instance high energy bars, that were essential when no other food was available and lightweight safari suits were appreciated for their flexibility and durability.

### **2.3.2 Local Food Functional Attributes**

Pertinent to local brands and their provenance, FutureBrand (2015) considers that a brand’s tangible assets relate to a country (or in this research context - county) as a source of ingredients, manufacture, process or assembly plus trademarks and patents. These may include accreditation schemes as outlined within Chapter One. Arguably accreditation schemes demonstrate the functional attributes of branding, serving a useful purpose such as traceability and safety (Lowman and McClelland 1994; Parrot et al. 2002; Morris and Buller 2003), to enhance and protect the environment (Murdoch et al. 2000) and sustainability (Holloway and Kneafsey 2000; Ilbery and Kneafsey 2000).

Moving to more focused consumer research for local food, there are practical or functional drivers that include supporting the local economy and community (Zepeda and Leviten-Reid 2004; Dukeshire et al. 2011; Schoolman 2016) and more specifically supporting local producers and farmers (Kemp et al. 2010; Dukeshire et al. 2011; Pearson et al. 2013; Bianchi and Mortimer 2015). Mintel (2013) provides evidence for supporting British growers and farmers and their survey found that most respondents say they are prepared to pay more for British food and drink (e.g. milk) if farmers receive the extra money. As many as three in five agree it is the duty of the retailers to support British farmers/growers. Mintel (2013) views this as an emotive issue and arguably both functionality and feelings intertwine here. Their survey showed more agreement here by

the over-65s, ABC1s and those earning higher incomes. Provenance is an issue (IDG 2012) and women tend to show greater interest in a product's origin (Mintel 2013).

Mintel (2015) asserts that there is some perception amongst consumers that buying local products is good for their health or their family's health. They cite documentaries such as '*Food, Inc*' (2008), and '*Super Size Me*' (2004) which revealed unsavoury facts about commercial farming and the fast food industries. When coupled with media attention on supermarket hygiene practices and questionable use of ingredients such as horsemeat where meat from overseas entered the UK food chain in January 2013, this has heightened consumers concerns about provenance and health. This makes consumers question their dietary choices further.

In their review of local food literature, Feldman and Hamm (2015) assert that taste is the greatest driver and 'freshness and taste' is supported by Roininen et al. (2006); Chambers et al. (2007); Kemp et al. (2010) and Pearson et al. (2013). Other drivers for purchasing local food include environmental benefits (Treagear and Ness, 2005; Kemp et al. 2010; Dukeshire et al. 2011; Pearson et al. 2013) and food safety (Bellows et al. 2010; Kemp et al. 2010). Mintel (2015) suggests that whilst local food is immune to industrialisation, consumers require reassurance that food production methods are humane and safe.

Local brands can benefit from more flexible pricing arrangements and the ability to be more profitable; they may have higher levels of awareness and can respond better to local needs (Schuiling and Kapferer 2004) and as such continue to remain strong (Schuiling and Kapferer 2004; Özsomer 2012). From a consumer point of view, there are different perspectives on price. Feldmann and Hamm (2015) find evidence that local food is not perceived to be expensive like organic food, however consumers are prepared to pay a premium. However, Mintel (2015) notes that most consumers say that lower prices would encourage them to buy more locally produced items. There is a perception that local products do not offer value for money and this is a key challenge for local producers and retailers. Mintel (2015) states that those with higher household incomes are more willing to pay extra on local foods with those earning less than £25000 a year being less willing to spend.

Chiming with the earlier call for clearer labelling (Chapter One) from accreditation schemes (DEFRA 2008; Countryfile 2012), there is a need for clearer labelling generally and, in addition, more promotional effort to highlight where products were produced or

sourced. Consumers want to understand the provenance of local food (Mintel 2015). There may be calls for more information about the supply chain and the origin of ingredients and consumers can be sceptical about on-pack information including product origin and where it is packed (Mintel 2013; 2015). There is a heightened interest in scrutinising the ingredients on the label given recent food scandals. More generally, local food consumers search for information (Zepeda and Deal 2009; Feldman and Hamm 2015) including the examination of labels, and this forms stronger attitudes, and therefore higher involvement stemming from this more considered thought.

However, most of these findings stem from a review of local food literature not local food brand literature which is considerably more limited. Specific mentions of local food brands within this local food literature are rare. In addition, research approaches here have adopted predominantly quantitative approaches and there is an opportunity to gain a further in-depth understanding of the tangible attributes, both sensorial and functional, of local food brands.

The local food literature shows evidence of functional tangible attributes as there is consumer interest in local food pricing, affordability, supporting farmers, provenance, animal welfare, labelling and packaging. This suggests some rationality in consumer thinking, so it is logical to now discuss functional attributes and levels of involvement in consumer decision making behaviour.

### **2.3.3 Functional Attributes and Involvement**

Rosenbaum-Elliott et al. (2011) have considered this area and whilst they take issue with conventional rational models of consumer choice, they offer some useful insights. Models can be based on a variety of cognitive thought processes where consumers try to maximise total utility and solve their consumer problems and dilemmas. This can involve using objective criteria such as price per gramme and miles per litre. Rosenbaum-Elliott et al. (2011) observe that the tangible attributes, such as price, frequency of purchase, risk of poor performance and safety concerns, affect the level of involvement associated with a brand. They assert that functional products, such as lawn mowers gain consumer satisfaction through their performance. Consumers here are highly involved and spend time with their information search, particularly as there is a reasonably high outlay in money required. They accept that a rational approach is relevant for consumer brands

offering utilitarian and tangible benefits, as this is supported by Levy (1959) and Holbrook (1978). Rosenbaum-Elliott et al. (2011) note that “*keeping promises of performance*” fits within their ‘functional realm’ (p.4). and more intangible aspects include social visibility and social meanings

Nonetheless there are many arguments that seek to relegate the importance of functional attributes. Consumption of functional goods may be repetitious, routine and habitual and purchases demand little or no planning or consequent reflection (Boden and Williams 2002). Typically, consumers’ level of involvement with the decision-making process is low for functional goods. Moreover, Rosenbaum-Elliott et al.’s (2011) issue is that this consumption process does not satisfy any emotional needs, citing Hirschman and Holbrook (1982). There is an implicit assumption that lower involvement and easily affordable brand purchases such as snack foods and soft drinks require little information search with consumers relying on heuristics to aid decision making. They have concerns with the ‘information search’ stage and argue that consumers engage in minimal search activities and they are becoming increasingly cynical about marketing efforts.

However, functional products or brands satisfy immediate, practical consumer needs with rational benefits (Bhat and Reddy 1998) and satisfy utilitarian uses. Keller (1993) suggests that functional benefits relate to the product attributes and help with problem solving and more basic motivations such as physiological and safety needs. Rosenbaum-Elliott et al. (2011) albeit caveat that “*no product is low involvement for every person at all times*” (p.11). This may be exemplified by Kimberly Clark’s sensorial and functional attribute of ‘softness’ that prevents noses from becoming sore when blowing into a tissue enhanced by its strength performance. This is important - no matter how routine, repetitious and habitual - if you have a sore nose, you are highly involved.

Consumers use tangible attributes as replacement signals for other attributes suggesting that brand name and price may give indications of quality. Round and Roper (2012) note that brand names can offer rational and habitual functions alongside those that are relationship based and symbolic; they later note a constancy function over time (2017). Consumers may make choices about between different brands based on packaging, pricing and taste preference, and packaged goods from grocery stores are chosen with little deliberation, and on habit and experience (Rosenbaum-Elliott et al. 2011; Batey 2016). Moreover Heath (2000) offers that sub-conscious decision-making takes place with little cognitive processing and Carpenter et al. (1994) state that meaningful brands

can be built from meaningless differentiation assuming that consumers construct inferences about the attributes of brands that have no basis in reality. Therefore, salience and trigger cues are important for low involvement, low risk consumer food brand choices. This, nonetheless, contrasts with other scholar's local food research (e.g. Treagear and Ness, 2005; Roininen et al. 2006; Kemp et al. 2010; Dukeshire et al. 2011; Pearson et al. 2013) finding that that consumers want to support farmers and they are concerned about their food's provenance, animal welfare, labelling and packaging suggesting more involvement.

#### **2.3.4 Functionality's Contribution to Brand Meaning**

As noted, Keller (2012) sees functionality, through its performance element, as central to a brand's meaning as it is the root of consumer engagement. Levy (1959) acknowledges the functionality of goods together with their symbolic properties - "*people buy things not only for what they do but also for what they mean*" (p.118) and therefore the 'doing' element has meaning. Franzen and Bowman (2001) observe that brand meaning can originate from the product function or brand's symbolic or abstract meaning. This is supported by Bhat and Rheddy (1998) who note that the

*"...functional or utilitarian needs of consumers could be exploited with a "functional" brand, i.e. one positioned with a functional brand concept or meaning. Similarly, a brand could be positioned as a "symbolic" brand to tap the needs of those who wish to enhance their self-image or their social image". (p.34)*

Batey (2016) asserts that his 'primary' brand meaning is largely influenced by the brand characteristics or attributes and its usage situation and functional performance, and even Hirschman (1980) recognises that "*...the meaning of one type of product may be largely dominated by its tangible properties*" (p.11). Therefore, functionality makes an important contribution to brand meaning. Functional attributes are important and De Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley (1998) cite a brand expert claiming that 90% of the brand relies of its functional values whilst the non-functional values flow from these. Whilst this is one of several views, it is supported by Kuhn et al. (2008) who assert that functional benefits of a product determine the buyer's choice in a business to business (B2B) environment. More generally, Gabay et al. (2009) found that messages that focused on product

functionality are stronger drivers of preference of one brand over another, and product features, rather than brand names, were the primary source of value across food brands.

Possibly indicative of the era, Holbrook (1978) found that the factual messages have the most a positive effect on consumers' beliefs. These are deemed more credible and shape the beliefs that the consumer believes to be the most important and hence are strongest in influencing brand preference. He finds that facts may be more relevant than effusive and enthusiastic sets of adjectives, worked within emotional copy themes, or those used in creating subjective appeals. In other words, facts speak louder and resonate more strongly than puffery. More recently this gains support from Mitchell (2005) who offers that many marketers dismiss core category benefits that matter to customers as simply the functional components which do not deliver differentiation. Bullmore (2001) states that the essential product, its delivery and function should be primary brand communication. Function is the permanent and first requirement for brand success.

Grobel (2013) suggests that it is appropriate to see if, instead of the brand being the differentiator of the product, the product may be the differentiator of the brand and recommends that there needs to be a greater alignment with the product functions. Grobel adds that there are several trends which suggest a focus on the roots of branding. These include the growth of own-label and ethical concerns which include an increasing consumer preoccupation with local sourcing, food miles and a focus on health. Havas Media Group (2015) found that if just under 74% of brands disappeared, most people would not be disappointed. In Western Europe, only 7% of brands are important to people and the figure drops to 5% in North America. Ang et al. (1990) note that functionality and durability is deemed to be more important by consumers when there is a downturn in the economy, which is particularly relevant since 2008. Chiming with this, Merrilees et al. (2014) demonstrate that lower socio-economic groups attach more functional meanings rather than symbolic to a city brand than those from higher socio-economic groups. Leung et al. (2014) found that utilitarian consumer-brand relationships are stronger than those that are affective. Other topical arguments include the growth of increased transparency via social networks combined with the increasing consumer scepticism for advertising, means that a brand's values should be increasingly transparent and accessible. Thom (2013) supports a shift from 'big' to 'real' and urges that brands should get real with meaning and this will not be achieved by strong creative in isolation, reflecting some of Holbrook's much earlier comments. Mohan et al. (2017) urge brand

managers not to underestimate functional brand attributes in favour of non-functional brand dimensions.

## **2.4 Section Four: Intangible Associations**

The discussion now moves to the consideration of the intangible associations and it is of interest to note their interplay with tangible attributes. Where appropriate the connections or comparisons between tangible attributes and intangible associations will be made. An intangible association has already been discussed and defined (see Figure Seven) and this is consistent with several brand definitions recognising intangible associations (e.g. Murphy 1990; Feldwick 2002; Jevons 2007). Hirschman's layers of idiosyncratic (or re-framed as psychological) subcultural and cultural meanings are discussed in this section. Both psychological and cultural associations are evident within gift giving and heritage and the latter paves the way for discussing local food brand cultural associations, with a discussion on materiality concluding this section. Whilst Hirschman was writing in 1980 and reflecting later in 1998, she was concerned about product meaning rather than brand meaning. It is useful to update Hirschman's perspectives with more recent evaluations of brand meaning. Belk (1988) offers further critical understanding of the self-concept to assist with psychological meanings. Escalas and Bettman (2005) contribute to the debate with their insights into self-reference groups which add further depth to the subcultural layer and Brown, Kozinets and Sherry (2003) reflect the cultural, social or subcultural (through brand communities) meanings together with the psychological in research exploring retro brands and the revival of brand meaning. These contributions together with other brand meaning scholarly support are now discussed. Within this discussion focusing around the intangible associations, it is useful to note how scholars perceive any connections with any tangible attributes. For example, Hirschman (1980) notes that a factual object can be evaluated and exemplifies this by suggesting that a tangible attribute of 'miles per gallon' can connect with a judgment of 'good economy'.

It has already been established that tangible attributes include the physical perceptible dimensions and the functional characteristics (e.g. performance potential). Hirschman argues that tangible attributes are "*accessible through the senses, [they are] ...palpable*" and these are objective as they exist '*independent of the mind*' and they generate data as detected by the senses, (Hirschman 1980, p.9). Intangible associations are more '*concept-*

*driven*' (Hirschman 1980, p. 12) and drawn from an individual's previous experiences. It has been established that both tangible and intangible attributes and associations both involve mental processing, but Hirschman (1980) focuses just on the product's intangible associations. Keller (1993) asserts that the deeper the mental processing by consumers, the stronger the associations created. This results in longer lasting memories, which increases the accessibility of information. Memories are recognised by Franzen and Bowman (2001) and Braun La-Tour et al. (2007) as having an active role for consumers to create their own meanings. Franzen and Bauman consider that memory is integral to brand meaning: they define brand meaning as the mental links among brand names, images and cognitions within the memory of the consumer which consequently ensures the brand acquires meaning. Braun- La-Tour et al. (2007) indicate that memories can symbolise how consumers connect with brands and they gain insight into brand meaning.

#### **2.4.1 Psychological Associations**

Hirschman (1980) proposes that idiosyncratic means that something is unique to the individual and their experiences, therefore it varies across people and is not shared by others. This is the characteristic of a specific person and links to their psychological state, with Hirschman drawing parallels here with an individual's emotions. Arguably a more encompassing term for this layer would be psychological associations. To understand an individual's perspective, is to further understand the self-concept. Baumeister (1999) defines this as:

*"the individual's belief about himself or herself, including the person's attributes and who and what the self is"* (p.13).

Escalas and Bettman (2005) link this with brands and assert that brands are symbols whose meaning helps define and create a consumer's self-concept. They examine "*self-brand connections*" (p.379) and the extent to which individuals have incorporated brands into their self-concept. This is corroborated by McCracken (1988), Belk (1988) and Dittmar (1992) who assert that individuals share in a process of transforming, transmitting and reproducing the social meanings of objects and consumption as a means of constructing and expressing identity. Consumers value the instrumental attributes and features of a brand providing tangible benefits but develop further connections, which are worth more than the sum of these instrumental benefits (Escalas and Bettman 2005). They

focus on symbolic brands such as pens and cars as they may symbolise prestige and argue that this is incorporated within a consumer's sense of self. They suggest that meaning is linked to symbolic properties which go beyond the functional. They assert that a set of brand associations becomes more meaningful the closer it is linked with self. To create one's self-concept allows an opportunity for asserting differentiation and individuality from others, satisfying psychological needs.

It is recognised that both tangible and intangible attributes can influence the self-concept. Park and Mittal (1985) suggest that individuals will be mainly interested in:

*“...either the product attributes and their performance (cognitive) or the product's meaning in relation to the individual's self-image (affective)”* (p. 92).

However, Bhat and Reddy (1998) provide evidence that consumers are comfortable holding both rational (cognitive) and symbolic (affective) associations with the same brand. There is an opportunity to explore how more functional brands can impact on the construction of identity.

Memories are recognised by Franzen and Bowman (2001), Zaltman (2003) Braun-La-Tour et al. (2007) and Plassman et al. (2007), as having an active role for consumers to create their own meanings. In their brand meaning definition, Franzen and Bouwman (2001) note the long-term memory is where the mental links to a brand name are held. They distinguish this from working memory where stimuli from our surroundings and representations in memory meet, however working memory is restricted in capacity. Meanings from long-term memory are drawn upon to interpret external stimuli which need thorough processing with connections being made to knowledge already present in long-term memory. Zaltman (2003) also comments on process as he notes there is a combination of the received information with consumers' own memories, other present stimuli and relevant metaphors that may be recalled as they digest the firm's message. Braun-La Tour (2007) find that the earliest and defining memories influence current and future preferences and these memory experiences are symbolic. Plassman et al. (2007) find that advertisements successfully appealing to the emotions are better recalled than those that are more cognitively based. However, they caveat that very little is known about how emotional memories are formed and how these impact upon consumer choice.

### **2.4.2 Subcultural Associations**

Whilst Escalas and Bettman (2005) give a useful perspective on self-concept, they also pay attention to reference groups. They suggest that brands can act as tools for social integration and this is an important source of brand meaning. The relationships amongst these consumers generate similar beliefs and they use each other as sources of information through both word of mouth and electronic word of mouth to establish and confirm their perspectives. They psychologically associate with a group they like and relate to it and this influences their expressive values. Communal meanings encapsulate social representations, dynamically constructed through social interactions to produce a shared reality (Ballantyne and Aitken 2007). Brown et al. (2003) develop this communal aspect further by suggesting that brands are social entities that are shaped, experienced and altered by communities. When considering the concept of brand identity, marketers communicate brand meanings to consumers, the recipients determine their own brand image or meaning, which is then in turn communicated back to the brand owners and the rest of the brand community (Brown et al. 1993; Campelo 2017). This is supported by Muniz and O'Guinn (2001) who comment that this community membership includes sharing an affinity that gives a common experience of belonging within that subculture. Brands can be the focus or perspective of the community and that the common experience draws from belonging to a specific era and its ethos (Brown et al. 2003; Campelo 2017). All this is highly symbolic in terms of the relationships communities have with brands albeit less attention is paid to the shared experiences of how brands function.

### **2.4.3 Cultural Associations**

Brown et al. (2003) focus on the cultural meaning of a brand, a common theme also recognised by other brand meaning scholars. Eckhardt and Houston (2002) state that brands can adopt disparate cultural values (both traditional and new), and both cultural and societal connotations may affect their meaning. Kates and Goh (2003) introduce the term "*brand morphing*" (p.59) and state that meanings can shift across different consumer groups, facilitated by practitioners' efforts to accommodate, reinforce and create diverse cultural meaning.

Brown et al. (2003) produce their '4A' concept of brand meaning consisting of aura (brand essence), allegory (brand stories), arcadia (idealised community) and antinomy

(contradiction or paradox). Through netnographic methods they analyse postings concerning the VW Beetle. Whilst their focus is intangible, they notice the contribution of functional attributes to brand meaning from a posting by Adams:

*“...and it seems that populist brand meanings are inextricably intertwined with the reliable design and do-it-yourself qualities of the original Volkswagen Beetle”* (p.23).

They demonstrate a fusion of tangible attributes with intangible associations shown by their allegorical context of the VW Beetle, revealing an intertwined meaning that is:

*“...moral, functional, and yet prone to individualization through consumer storytelling”* (p.23).

An allegorical perspective aligns with storytelling which has been defined earlier by Sole and Gray Wilson (1999):

*“sharing of knowledge and experiences through narrative and anecdotes in order to communicate lessons, complex ideas, concepts, and causal connections”* (p.6).

Brown et al. (2003) are more concerned with the intangible associations yet they tell a story rooted in tangible attributes. They appear dismissive of the tangible and they critique the strategic brand management models of Aaker (1996) and Keller (1993) as they imply that brands are fixed cognitive associations of meanings. They suggest these models take a more structured view. They argue that Keller’s interpretation of providing a brand with meaning implies explaining what a product can functionally do for consumers and why it is different and special from others in the category. Thus, he strongly relates meaning to brand benefits. Brown et al. (2003) argue this overlooks the *“emotional complexity that endows the brand with texture, nuance, and dimensionality”* (p.30) and there is a need for a more sophisticated comprehension of the cultural meanings. They suggest that brands are expanding, dynamic, social universes composed of stories; however, they fail to recognise their own contributions to meaning from their inclusion of the tangible functional attributes of the brand.

Nonetheless, storytelling, particularly in advertising, can be a powerful tool with which to engage consumers (Holt 2004). Stories can instil strong feelings of joy (Dessart 2018). Yet care is needed with framing stories through character development. Characters are important vehicles for narrative transportation, yet Dessart (2018) finds that consumers

may be too totally engrossed with the character, lose touch with their own reality and fail to self-identify as there is little overlap with their self-image. Animal characters, in particular, can be problematic as they are less easy to identify with. Factual elements can help balance a storytelling ad to avoid total consumer immersion and transportation. Some cognitive processing involving situational projection and identifying with the characters is recommended (ibid).

Whilst clearly cultural meanings offer a rich understanding of brand meaning, Keller's (1993) contribution should not be dismissed. His brand benefits include the experiential, functional and symbolic. Sensory elements appear in the experiential benefits, including how it feels like to use the brand relating to sensory pleasure, cognitive stimulation and variety. This contrasts with his functional benefits which relate to product attributes and are linked to problem solving and more basic motivations such as physiological and safety needs. In turn, symbolic benefits have more extrinsic advantages that are non-product-related attributes and are related to self- image and personal expressions of self-esteem. Yet, as Dessart (2017) suggests, these can be overpowered by too strong a narrative transportation within a storytelling execution.

Veloutsou and Moutinho (2008), whilst they support Brown et al. (2003) in that they suggest that consumers use products for their symbolic meaning, also recognise their utility, the other division of the dichotomy. This echoes Levy's (1959) contribution which acknowledges the functionality of goods together with their symbolic - "*people buy things not only for what they do but also for what they mean*" (p.118). Round and Roper (2012; 2017) acknowledge the importance of both rational and symbolic values to brand names with the chocolate bar Twirl not only representing pleasant taste but a connection to childhood memories. Achenreiner and John (2003) in their work with young children, assert that brand names are useful as a perceptual cue to identify a product, as younger children connect with brands that they associate with certain perceptual features. However, as children get older brands can also be associated with conceptual or symbolic meanings which may communicate prestige, trendiness or status. Morgan and Reichert (1999) explore the use of concrete or abstract types of metaphor used in advertising to convey brand meaning observing that concrete metaphors are experienced through the five senses whilst abstract metaphors are gleaned through more intangible cues. However, the literature is largely silent on how the tangible attributes may connect with the intangible associations.

Martin et al. (2005) recognise that more work can be done here. Their research offers useful insights into brand meaning through goal congruency across brand extensions. They note that brand associations can include concrete and abstract product attributes, but they call for further research to ascertain the relative importance of both these elements. The dichotomous theme is never far away with these discussions, with contrasts made between symbolic and utility (Veloutsou and Moutinho 2008), doing and meaning (Levy 1959), perceptual features and conceptual or symbolic meanings (Achenreiner and John 2003) and concrete or abstract (Morgan and Reichert 1999; Martin et al. 2005). This dichotomous position contrasts with Keller's argument that it is a combination of functional, experiential and symbolic benefits that combine with consumer attitudes that create brand meaning. This suggests an overlap of tangible attributes and intangible associations. Brown et al. (2003) do not go quite that far, but note that intangible associations overlap when they observe that:

*“Consumers construct their own brand stories (cultural) using the raw material of producer and cultural intermediary stories and adding their own idiosyncratic (psychological) viewpoints, needs, goals, and experiences”* (p.30).

A further three aspects of culture relevant to this research that contribute to brand meaning are now discussed, namely gift giving, heritage and local food brand cultural associations. Gift giving demonstrates how tangible attributes and intangible associations are both relevant.

#### **2.4.3.1 Gift Giving**

As local food brands can be given as gifts, gift giving literature warrants some attention. A gift can be defined as a good or service voluntarily provided to another person or group (Belk and Coon 1993). Sherry (1983) supports this by asserting that a gift is a type of benefit given by a donor to a recipient. Larson and Watson (2001) comment that the enjoyment and satisfaction from the experience of giving a gift have not received much attention in the literature. Sherry (1983) adds that the conceptualizations of gift giving are unclear and somewhat varied.

Gifts can have both tangible attributes and intangible associations. Larson and Watson (2001) offer four values of gift giving, which are the economic, functional, social, and expressive values; however, they relegate the object values in favour of exploring

intangible thoughts and feelings around gift giving. A familiar tangible attribute is that gifts may simply be valued for their economic worth. A second attribute is functional, namely the utilitarian attributes. An intangible association is social value and the role of gifts in maintaining relationships and establishing social ties. The final intangible value is where the gift may capture some perspective of the donor, providing an expressive value.

The aspect of relationship and social ties is reflected by Areni et al. (1998) who consider that the recipient is reminded of the donor when she thinks about their gift. Hence, as gifts are seldom considered as distinct from the giver, gifts are expressive of the self. Sherry (1983, p.159) considers the expressive or self-concept element of gift giving when he asserts that “*self-identity may be confirmed by presenting it to others in the objectified form of a gift.*” Giving an appropriate gift can show that the recipient is special and unique, and appropriateness is a key characteristic of the perfect gift (Belk, 1996; Areni et al.1998). Belk and Coon (1993) determine that gifts anticipating and understanding what the recipient wants, without having to be asked, are valued and thoughtful. This is echoed by Robben and Verhallen (1994) who assert that to be appropriate, the giver chooses something that will be liked and is right for the recipient.

Gifts can provide a symbolic representation of a relationship and Larson and Watson (2001) suggest that a marital gift of a vacuum cleaner is an inappropriate symbol of what the relationship represents. However, they acknowledge that functionally driven gifts such cameras and briefcases, are appreciated because of their utility value, and point out that this aspect of gift giving is seldom discussed. Finally packaging and presentation can enhance the gift-giving experience (Belk 1996) and is more valued as it is associated with higher levels of psychic effort (Larson and Watson 2001).

#### **2.4.3.2 Heritage**

Culture is a useful backdrop to comprehending heritage. Harrison (2013) suggests definitions of heritage can be derived from social-cultural anthropology which is recognised within societies and practices and comprehended as culture. Heritage is challenging to define but it is viewed as embracing the past, present and future (Graham et al. 2000; Wuestefeld 2012) and is something of value. Jackson (2002) asserts that economic value and the commercial commodification of goods in the context of food and

fashion is as important as tradition when considering culture. This is corroborated by Bridge and Smith (2003) who refer to the closing gap between cultural and economic entities, suggesting they have geographic lives. This has been given meaning through the branding processes (Castree 2001) and heritage may be a foundation of brand building (Urde et al 2007; Fan 2014). Hakala et al. (2015) contribute that brand heritage is a combination of history, consistency and continuity of core values, visual symbols and product brands. Schultz and de Chernatony (2002) assert that cultural meaning and value is vital in understanding how heritage may be significant within a branding context.

Geographical origin can be historically related to branded objects and products (Pike 2009) and Aaker (1996) emphasises the benefits in connecting brands to geographic location to gain credibility and imply higher quality. Pike (2011) reinforces this by suggesting that social construction of geographic location generates value and meaning to commodities. More specifically, place heritage connects heritage with a physical space that is a place and involves its history, personality or essence, the permanence of its resident population and symbols (Hakala and Sjöblom 2015). This leads now to a discussion around local brands which relate to a particular geographic area, specifically exploring any intangible associations found within any local brand literature.

#### **2.4.3.3 Local Brand Cultural Associations**

Local brands have been defined as brands existing in a limited geographical area or in one country (Wolfe 1991). Özsomer (2012) asserts that they can be tailor-made to and developed for specific needs and wants of local markets. The functional attributes of local food have already been articulated earlier in Section Three but of note here is the impact of local culture. This is seen as having a strong influence on and benefit to local brands (e.g. Samli 1995; Steenkamp et al. 2003; Steenkamp and De Jong 2010). As such, local brands can display competitive advantage through both functional and symbolic approaches. Functionally local brands can be developed to be better tailored to local consumers' needs (Kapferer 2002). Symbolically local brands can be created as an icon of local culture (Steenkamp et al. 2003). Indeed, local brands can emphasise and embed local cultural connections using local themes and symbols to enhance their positioning (Alden et al. 2006; Llonch-Andreu et al. 2016; Steenkamp 2016) that can assist with meeting specific local needs.

Chiming with the symbolic positioning of local brands, local food literature has recognised the intangible associations associated with local food. Cavanaugh (2012) asserts that local food exchanges create economic sociability, which is both a social as well as economic exchange creating meaning and value simultaneously, albeit this may underplay the meaning of value. However, arguably this notion does display aspects of functional and symbolic approaches. With more intangible associations, Ilbery and Kneafsey (1998) recognise the importance of cultural authenticity, and later link this to geographic origin (Ilbery and Kneafsey (2000) whilst Autio et al. (2013) focus on nostalgia with Gilg and Batterhill (1998) noting that food of the past is ‘good and proper’. Associating local food with an alleged origin within a local food culture is seen as desirable, albeit this may be illusory, as Tellstrom et al. (2006, p.138) suggest that a marketed authenticity is a:

*“...representation of a defined reality...the local element need not be authentic but must be experienced as a mythical reality”.*

They continue that the cultural symbols’ purpose is to “*represent and not reflect*” (p.140). Given this is somewhat insubstantial, there is a need to further ground this assertion within the local food brands, so this section closes with a discussion on materiality that suggests that material goods can encapsulate cultural components (Woodward 2011).

#### **2.4.3.4 Materiality**

Campelo (2017) develops this social construction aspect in relation to brand meaning of places. She introduces the term ‘materiality’ to this research. She argues that brand meaning is inclusive, integrated and collaborative and involves dynamic co-creation through social interaction to produce a shared reality. Her focus is on the place brand experience and notes that this includes the notion of materiality but asserts that it cannot be detached from symbolic meaning and that “*materiality is soaked by symbolism*” (p.77). This is exemplified an artefact or statue that represents some past historical significance for a city brand. Woodward (2011) corroborates this noting that an on-going interaction with a product or object aligns with customs, practices and arguably rituals, furthering linkage with emotions and imagination, with both the material product and the resulting consumer relationships being interdependent. This notion is evolved by Ferreira and

Scaraboto (2016) who assert that through its mediating role, the concept of materiality is dynamic in that it can connect and transform objects and consumers at the same time.

Miller (1987) rejects the notion of dualism or that of a dichotomy by asserting that “*mere artifacts or materiality*” are inseparable from the “*ephemeral, the imaginary, the biological and the theoretical*” (p.4). She proposes a notion of material embeddedness. This suggests that material (or arguably tangible) aspects of a brand have difficulty being separated from intangible associations. Brands (or products as they tend to be termed within this school of thought) encapsulate cultural components (Woodward 2011; Campelo 2017). They are viewed as abstract and can be subjective with arbitrary meanings that are socially constructed and culturally related (Mick et al. 2004). With echoes of earlier psychological engagement, individuals are motivated through brands about the possibilities for enhancing their self-image (Ferreira and Scaraboto 2016) aligning with consumers purchasing images and experiences to express their identities and communicate personal meanings then shared with their communities and networks (Muniz and O’Guinn 2001). Whilst the notion of materiality is interesting, this research seeks to analyse the separate notions of tangible attributes and intangible associations first, before considering any notions of inseparability or holistic meanings.

The literature review now turns to dealing with the connections between the tangible attributes and the intangible associations within any hierarchical arrangements present in brand models evident in the brand management literature. This is contrasted with consumer behaviour perspectives, then it is followed by discussing any alternative structures of meaning such as engrams.

## **2.5 Section Five: Hierarchical Connections**

This section firstly deals with an area of literature exploring hierarchical connections, the means-ends theory by Gutman (1982; 1997); this informs brand models such as De Chernatony’s brand pyramid (2006) amongst others adopting a hierarchical approach. The discussion then takes a consumer behaviour focus, moving to the contemplations of Hirschman (1980;1998) and Holt (2004) who similarly take a hierarchical, sequenced and evolutionary position. This include a discussion of use value (Marx 1930) and sign values, the latter being viewed as more dominant referents in society (Veblen 1925; Brown at al. 2003; Mick et al. 2004; Holt 2004; Campelo 2017). This is contrasted with Lee (1993)

and Gottdiener (2000) who support a more holistic approach where use and sign value or material and symbolic meanings are intertwined. Miller (1987), Woodward (2011) Ferreira and Scaraboto (2016), and Campelo (2017) suggest inseparability between the material and the psychological and cultural associations. This leads to a final reflection on alternatives to hierarchical approaches; a web of associations that is reflected in engrams (Schacter 1996; Franzen and Bowman 2001; Batey 2016) which adopts a less structured and networked approach. This section therefore commences with determining what a means-ends laddering approach is; then De Chernatony's Brand Pyramid is discussed as it is illustrative of such an approach.

### 2.5.1 Means-Ends Theory

Gutman's (1982) means-end theory proposes that the attributes defining a brand (the 'means') have consequences for the consumer and these reinforce their values (the 'ends'). Figure Eight illustrates this process. Consumers choose brands for their attributes producing corresponding outcomes although Gutman is silent on the role of associations. The means-end chain concept allows brands to be positioned by associating the means (the brand's physical aspects) with advertising that links the brand's consumptions to the achievement of desired ends (valued states). Evolving Gutman's (1982) assertions, brand attributes *and* associations can correspond to useful and desirable consequences and generate relevant personal values.

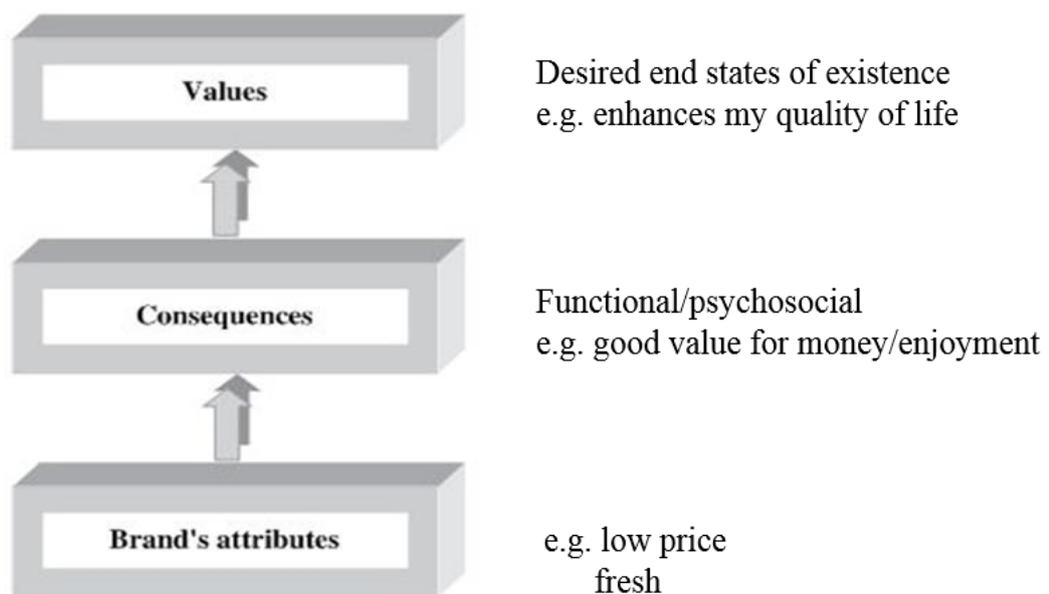


Figure Eight: Means-Ends Laddering Approach: Adapted from Gutman (1982).

Values are defined here as desirable end-states of existence. Value-laden considerations, or states, are exemplified by wanting to look attractive and accomplished, and these can be achieved by being well-dressed. Therefore, consumers will choose the clothing brands whose attributes they associate with being well-presented. Values therefore are important in guiding choice. A means-end chain model explains how a brand can achieve a desired end state, and consumers' future brand choice behaviour is guided accordingly. They learn which are desirable outcomes and ones to avoid.

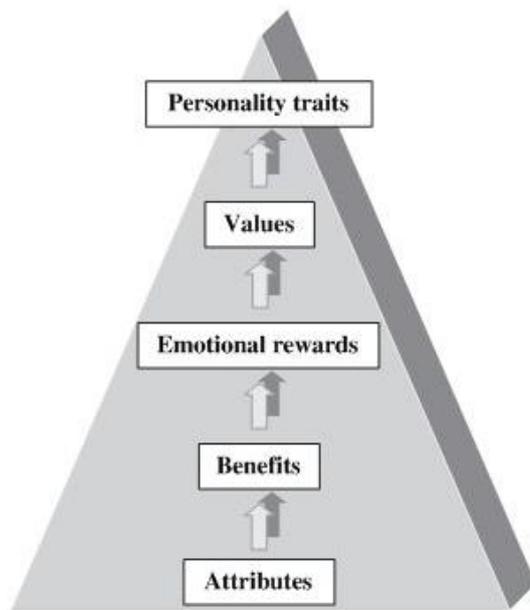
There are levels within this approach. The physical attributes and abstract associations form the lowest level. Next come the functional and psychosocial consequences or outcomes, and at the final level are consumers' instrumental and terminal values (Reynolds and Gutman 1988). This is a hierarchical ordering: consumer outcomes cannot affect product attributes, but consuming brands with specific attributes can affect consumer outcomes and arguably future brand associations. There is a flow toward the desired ends from the brand to the consumer's self-concept (Gutman 1997).

The series of elements reflect a laddering approach, moving from attributes to benefits to values (Gutman 1982; Reynolds and Gutman 1988; Gutman 1997). Consumers receive benefits from the consequences of consuming the brand, for example 'white teeth' is a benefit that can be obtained from tooth brushing with a toothpaste containing teeth whitening ingredients. It is possible that following the means-ends approach may just achieve the benefit that satisfies the consumer. It may not always be directly correlated with an ultimate desired value which is the basis for the chain (Franzen and Bowman 2001). Gutman (1997) acknowledges this through a coffee consumption example. Coffee may have the benefit of allowing someone to wake up ready to face the day, but he/she does not connect this with accomplishment and success through enhanced job performance which may be the ultimate goal. Here the ladder only goes so far and stops short. However, Gutman suggests that for brands which are purchased for their symbolic value, their consumption is more likely to be linked to higher level goals, values or self-concept.

Laddering therefore involves asking respondents to rank attributes and rate the relative importance of each attribute. Probing of each distinction takes place until the respondent can no longer answer (Judica and Perkins 1992). Finally, diagrams are drawn showing the cognitive linkages between respondents' attributes consequence and values (Reynolds and Gutman 1988). There have been several other local food related studies that have

employed the laddering technique (Nielson et al. 1998; Zanolli and Naspetti 2002; Baker et al. 2004; De Ferran and Grunert 2007; Roininen et al. 2006; Barrera and Sanchez 2009). Of note is that whilst a couple of these have looked at organic foods, none of these studies have considered local food brands, nor have they researched through a brand meaning lens. A laddering technique can be used in an interview situation and is a one-on-one in-depth technique to unwrap how respondents understand a brand's attributes and develop associations, consequences and values (Gutman 1982). Laddering aims to generate insights into consumer motivations for purchase (Malhotra and Birks 2006). There are two types of laddering. Hard laddering occurs where the respondent is forced to produce individual ladders reflecting the sequence of the abstraction of the data. Data may be gathered by self-administered questionnaires (Walker and Olson 1991) and it can be difficult to detect the strategic or considered processing by the respondent. Soft laddering respects the respondent's natural flow of speech with the attribute-consequence-value linkages being reconstructed by the interviewer afterwards which may increase the interviewer involvement and potential bias (Grunert and Grunert 1995).

Franzen and Bowman (2001) have three concerns with this laddering approach. The first is that the method fails to distinguish between associations held in long-term memory and working memory. Secondly the consumer has difficulty placing a brand within this chain when the brand values or meanings may not correspond with their own values and thirdly, they argue that some obfuscation of the core meanings of the brand occurs, resulting from the research method used. They also assert that this method fails to distinguish the importance of the meanings identified. Nonetheless this approach has been borrowed by other brand scholars such as De Chernatony to create his brand pyramid which focuses on an internal brand perspective from an employee or brand manager point of view which may possibly overcome some of these concerns. De Chernatony's pyramid is shown in Figure Nine.



*Figure Nine: The Brand Pyramid: De Chernatony (2006 p.259)*

The pyramid adopts a hierarchical approach suggesting that it is to be employed in a sequential way and influences from Gutman (1982) are evident with including attributes, benefits and values. Many other scholars adopt a similarly ordered and sequential approach with their brand models or frameworks, some of which recognise the consumer perspective (e.g. Goodyear 1996; Aaker 1996; de Chernatony and Dall’Olmo Riley 1997; McEnally and De Chernatony 1999; Keller 2003b; Batey 2016). The tangible elements are relegated to lower levels and intangible elements feature higher up the hierarchy. This is exemplified by De Chernatony’s ‘emotional rewards’ and ‘personality traits’ within his brand pyramid.

Kapferer (2008) asserts that tangible attributes are the precursors to intangible associations and the tangible attributes should appropriately underpin the intangible associations (Gray and Balmer 1998). This view is shared by some consumer behavior scholars and their perspectives as to how tangible attributes interplay with intangible associations are now discussed.

### **2.5.2 Consumer Behaviour Perspectives**

Hirschman suggests a hierarchy or order within her layers of meaning albeit the sequence of the layers in 1980 are inconsistent to her approach in 1998 (see Figures One and Three respectively). The multiple layers of meaning in Figure One reflect Hirschman’s original

conjecture that commonly held culturally shared associations were a promising line of enquiry compared to idiosyncratically held associations. Subsequent research the following year (Hirschman 1981) possibly influenced her to reconsider and re-order her layers of meaning accordingly (see Figure Three). The direction of flow has been added albeit Hirschman numbered each layer. Of note is that the tangible layer is relegated at the expense of the intangible associations.

Holt (2004) is critical of brand models, particularly 'onion' models (p. xii). He proposes his own evolutionary approach consisting of a mindshare, emotional, viral and cultural interpretations of branding. He feels that too much time is spent obsessing over brand models and what he refers to as the language of mindshare. This is a traditional view, including a cost-plus approach, building brand equity through a set of associations. This use of brand modelling has its roots in the unique selling proposition, and this has been prevalent in marketing since the 1980s but reduces the brand to "*a handful of abstract concepts*" (p.20). This builds a picture of every brand manager having their brand modelled and spending too much time arguing over the correct adjectives with which to populate it and measuring these adjectives' awareness with consumers in tracking studies. This aligns with Brown et al.'s (2003) criticism of Keller (1993) and Aaker (1996), suggesting that their models take a fixed and structured view of meanings relating to brand's distinctiveness and benefits, but they overlook some of Keller's detailed nuances within his Customer Brand Based Equity model relating to heritage, history and experiences. However, Holt acknowledges this 'mind-share' approach can be effective approach for low involvement, utilitarian brands, but it may be difficult to discern if these brands have absolutely no risk, are always low involvement and do not have some symbolic connection or sign value.

Holt (2004) is equally dismissive of what he classifies as 'emotional branding' which is an evolution of mindshare branding but involving consumers' complex emotions and desires. This became more popular in the 1990s with the evolution of the Brand DNA or essence which allowed the brand to be summed up in one word or neat phrase such as Danone meaning health. Holt argues that there are too many brands wanting to own emotions such as optimism, joy or happiness and it is uncertain as to whether consumers resonate with these emotional associations, making appropriate connections with the relevant brands. He acknowledges 'viral branding' involving the discussion around the brand by lead or influential consumers telling others how they feel and the subsequent

engagement or the devotion of its customers. Nevertheless, he argues that true emotional connections can only be made by leveraging a great myth, and supported by Brown et al. (2003), Mick et al. (2004) and Woodward (2011) he asserts that culture shapes social interactions. Brands need to engage in key cultural issues and champion an ideology or seize upon a modern myth presumably assuming there happens to be one around that is appropriate for the brand. Brands can capture a cultural tension caused by a social disruption. Holt argues that when society changes it alters a key ideology which creates opportunities for brands. He gives an example that a demographic explosion in the 1990s created the craft category when the first generation with university educated parents came of age. This created an upper middle class of bourgeois-bohemians (bo-bos) that desired new brands that convey cultural sophistication particularly in the food and drink categories, with themes prevalent such as artisanship and authenticity. Nonetheless, it may be a little sweeping to suggest that local food and drink brands appeal only to this target audience.

The cultural tension caused by a social disruption is possibly better exemplified by Holt's sports brand example. This draws upon modern myths and stories making an emotional connection and 'mythologising' an ideology. Typically, this highlights a subculture found for example in the Brooklyn area which is one of the harshest urban environments in the US, where it is seemingly impossible for locals to succeed. However, so the myth goes, if you have the right ideology you can achieve, particularly if you are equipped with the right sports brand. You can have the American dream in the very worst circumstances. This transforms the brand from being just functional to iconic. To make an iconic brand, Holt (2004) suggests targeting national contradictions which reflect any major anxieties affecting the national identity, speak with a rebel's voice, re-engage with any previously created myths and draw upon cultural knowledge. Despite his earlier criticisms of a modelling approach, Holt proceeds to identify a series of approaches and components for models and briefs for developing iconic brands. This recipe includes identifying the myth treatment, the element of populist authenticity, the charismatic aesthetic and social disruption.

The relationships between the tangible attributes and intangible associations can also be explored by borrowing from semiotics and (re)visiting the concepts of use and sign value. The use-value (Marx 1930) of a brand's functional attributes has been referred to within the functionality literature review section earlier. It describes the utilitarian value of the

functional performance of a product which may reflect a more involved decision-making approach (Bardhi et al. 2012), which is not always fully acknowledged within the earlier brand modelling approaches.

Veblen (1925) asserts that commodities are sign vehicles carrying social meaning forming social strata. Cherrier and Murray (2004) cite Baudrillard (1988) who offers that commodities are assembled into a system of signs governed by the logic of a cultural code which structures, organises and reproduces social reality. This is evidenced by Gabriel and Lang (1995, p. 60) also citing Baudrillard (1988) who asserts:

*“Objects are categories of objects which quite tyrannically induce categories of persons. They undertake the policing of social meanings and the significations they engender are controlled.”*

In this way, Baudrillard (1988) cited by Lee (1993) suggests that consumers have become the vehicles for transmission for consumer objects which help to classify the social world. Gottdiener (2000) is more holistic and suggests that objects also have sign value which encompasses everything to do with the object, its use (function), desire, exchange and what it symbolises. He is cautious about Baudrillard’s (1988) position which appeals to many scholars (e.g. Brown et al. 2003; Mick et al. 2004; Holt 2004; Campelo 2017) whereby signs dominate culture and are a dominant referent in society. Gottdiener supports commodities’ use-value to fulfil a physical or psychological need and states that it is critical to understand the sign value of goods to determine consumption motives. He has earlier support from Lee (1993):

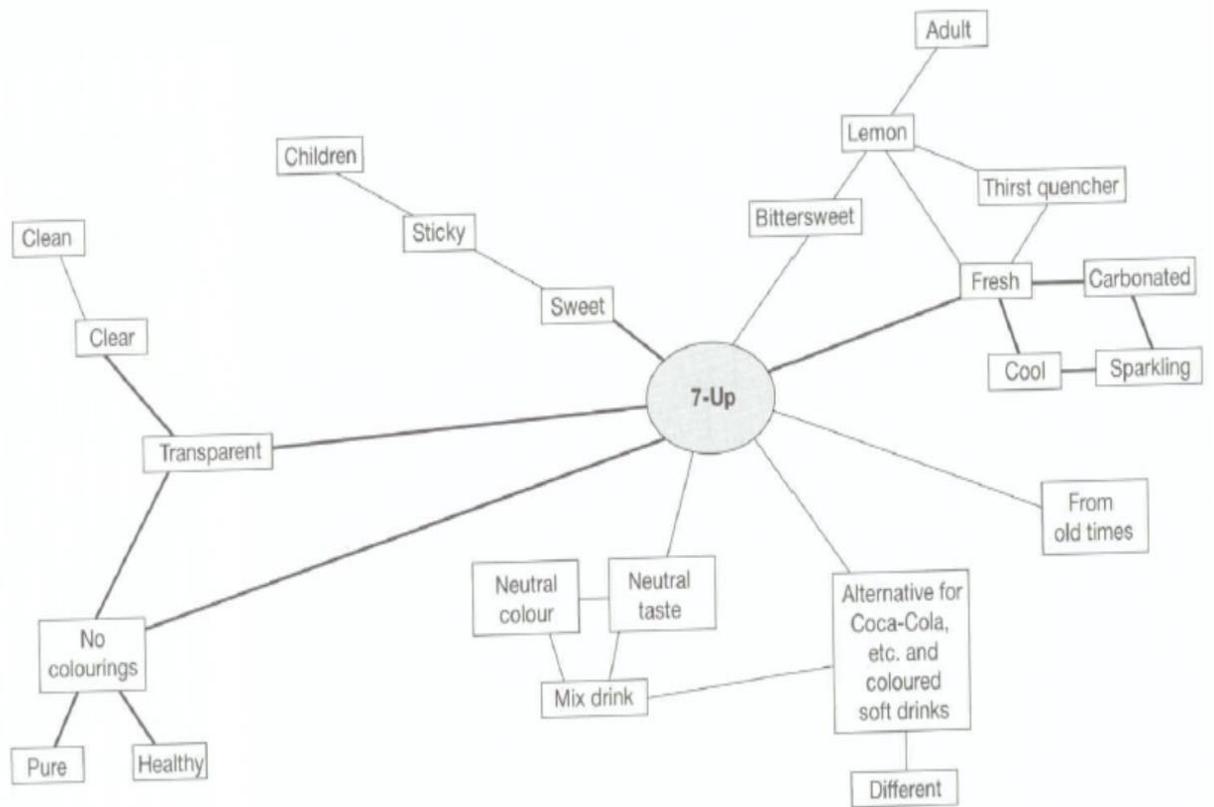
*“a commodity is always consumed symbolically, as a social meaning or as a cultural good as well as in its material substance as a functional utility...the material and the symbolic dimensions of goods, their economic values and their cultural meanings share in an inseparable and insoluble relationship”.*

Whilst use-value may have been overlooked or even relegated by scholars (e.g. Veblen 1925; Gabriel and Lang 1995; Cherrier and Murray 2004) Gottdiener (2000) and particularly Lee (1993) support a more holistic approach where use and sign value or material and symbolic meanings are intertwined reflecting Miller’s (1987) earlier stance. A further exploration of signs and semiotics can offer a little more insight into these connections.

Semiotics is the study of signs which can generate meaning. Solomon et al. (1999) suggest that the semiotic view of the sign is a sensory image which portrays the object's intended meanings. Barthes (1967) originally ascribed the denotation and connotation dimensions of meaning furthering Saussure's 1879 study of the structure of language and linguistic signs. Barthes highlighted that denotation is what is described but connotation is how it is described which can make the intended object appear very different. The signifier is the material or physical carrier of meaning (denotation) and the signified is the mental construct or representation (connotation). Of importance is that there can be more than one level of connotation which leads to the creation of myths and stories. Slater (1997) draws an appropriate example with food demonstrating that the hamburger can represent a patty of beef in a bun, but it can further connote US culture. Indeed, advertising can offer information beyond just its denotative content (Mick and Buhl 1992) and there can be several connotative meanings that also stem from the messages. These may range from Ronseal's "*it does exactly what it says on the tin*" (Elliott and Percy 2007, p.4) that offers a straightforward performance meaning compared to those that have elaborate intangible meanings. These may use symbols, for example Duracell's bunny to represent further meanings of potency. Therefore, it can be asserted that meanings can be simple and straight-forward and connect with use-value linking to functionality, or, they can be more elaborate with connections to intangible associations. Franzen and Bouwman (2001) offer a parallel here in that they believe that brand associations can be made based on direct or indirect experiences. Direct associations are where a stimulus creates a direct link with meaning in memory e.g. Pampers directly connotes nappies and therefore represents a simple and straight-forward meaning. Alternatively, there may be more indirect sets of connections. For example, a chain of associations moves from babies to nappies to dry bottoms to Pampers giving further performance related meanings. Other examples include Shredded Wheat can directly connect with breakfast cereal, or, Perrier can indirectly connect mineral water, to France, to French chic, revealing more intangible associations (Franzen and Bowman 2001). This resonates with Slater's (1997) earlier contentions about hamburgers. As such, this challenges how brand associations may be arranged; the connections can be short or long, direct or indirect. Connections may also not be sequenced but intertwined (Gottdiener 2000; Lee 1993). Therefore, whilst there are some consumer behaviour perspectives that not only concur with hierarchical approaches, it is evident that there are some other viewpoints that consider alternative more elaborate and intertwined approaches; these are now discussed.

### 2.5.3 Alternatives to Hierarchical Approaches

These can include schemas (or schemata), engrams (or memory traces) and brand codes. Schemas and engrams are terms that can be used interchangeably (Campion and Elliott Smith 1934) as they both relate to mental structures. However, it may be useful to define them to determine any subtle differences. Schemas can be defined as organised mental structures used to help interpret, simplify and organise our knowledge of the world around us (Batey 2016). Similarly, Starch (2018) defines a brand code as a complicated mental structure that represents the brand, arising from brand experiences. For this research, the term brand engram is developed which Franzen and Bouwman (2001) define as “*the representation of a brand at a neuronal level*” (p.19). Schacter (1996) asserts that we create engrams from encoding an experience and may be temporary or more permanent, albeit Franzen and Bouwman (2001) assert that it is a permanent change in the brain resulting from the learning process. Different sounds, sights, words and actions become analysed and as a result, neurons in different parts of the brain become related to one another. An engram is created which is this new pattern of connections and is the brain’s record of the event (Schacter 1996) and the neural basis for memory (Franzen and Bouwman 2001). However, Franzen and Bouwman caveat that there is no definitive answer for what constitutes the formation of a memory. Nothing has been discovered on the real nature of the engram. As such they develop an associative brand network approach which is based on consumers’ direct or indirect experiences, illustrated by the earlier Shredded Wheat, Pampers and Perrier examples as given by Franzen and Bouwman (2001). These connections are stimulated by stimuli received. This is exemplified by the brand 7 Up and they created an associative brand network from interviews using the stimulus of the brand name (Figure Ten).



*Figure Ten: Associative Brand Network for 7 Up: Franzen and Bouwman (2001 p.179)*

Whilst Franzen and Bouwman are cautious as to the composition of an engram, Dunsdon (2009; 2015) and Batey (2016) are more assertive. Dunsdon simply refers to Franzen and Bouwman’s associative brand network approach for 7 Up as an engram (see Figure 11).

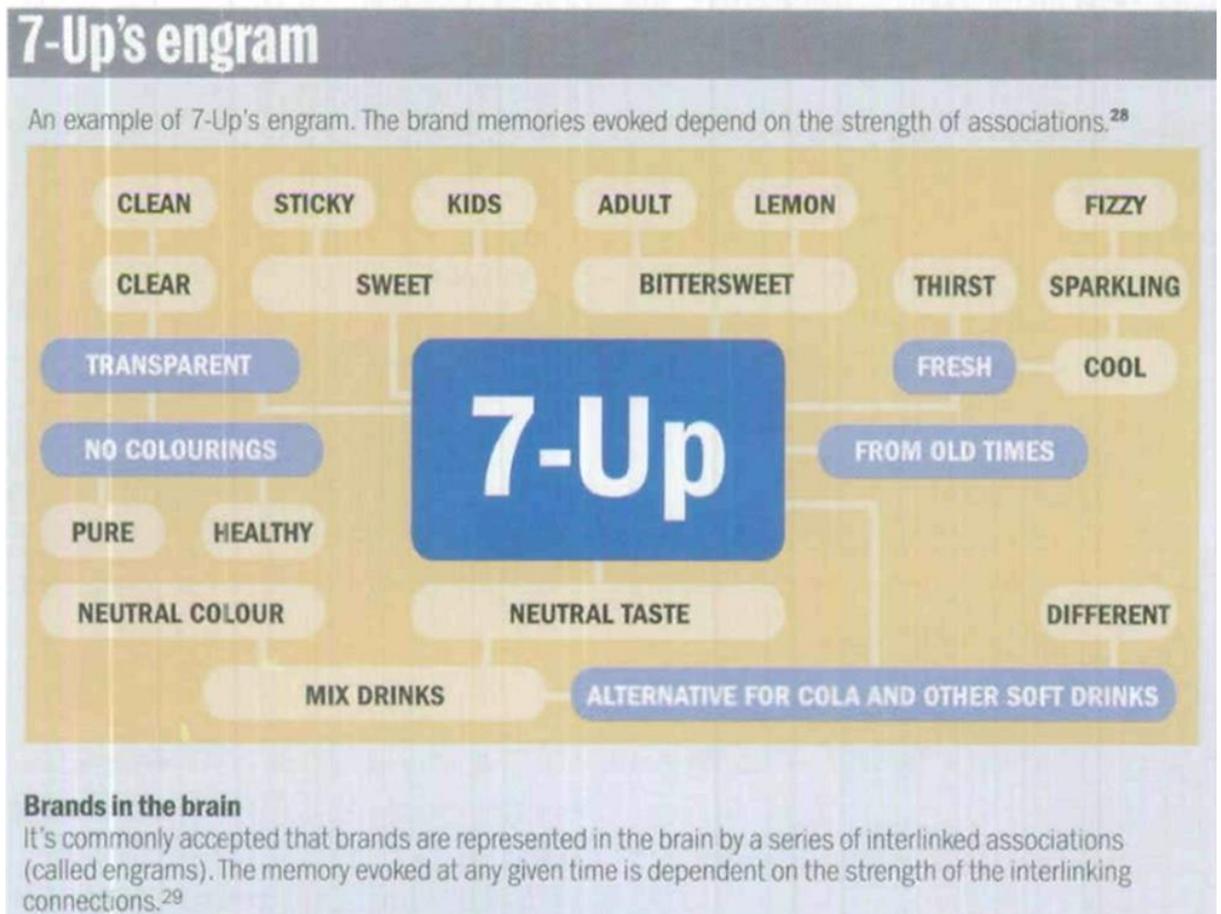


Figure 11: Engram of 7-Up: Dunsdon (2009 p.15)

Dunsdon's (2009) 7 Up engram differs from Franzen and Bouwman's (2001) associative brand network original as the latter demonstrates the strength of the association by creating thicker lines to associations such as "transparent", "fresh" and "no colourings"; these meanings derive from sensory attributes. This reinforces the notion that sometimes meaning emanates from the tangible attributes. In both Figures, there is less emphasis on the abstract meanings albeit Dunsdon highlights "from old times" which was not emphasised in the original.

Batey (2016) is more circumspect using Gatorade to create an associative neural network (see Figure 12) which is based on the principle of the brain storing engrams.

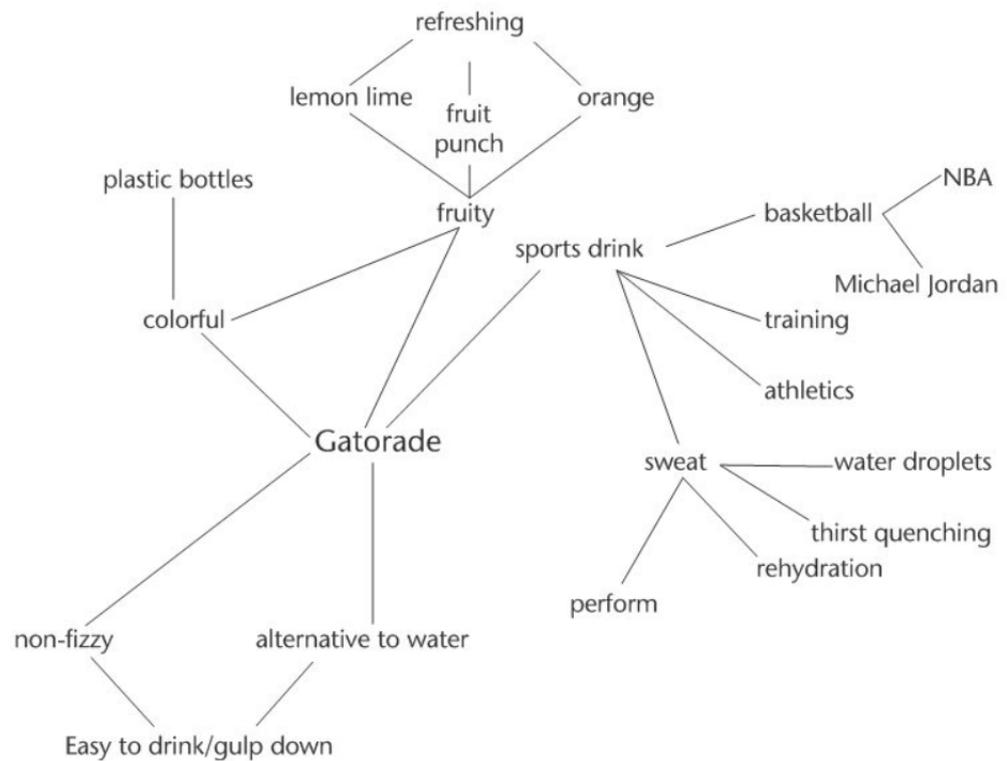


Figure 12: The Gatorade Brand as Associative Neural Network: Batey (2016 p.5)

Whilst he evolves Franzen and Bowman's (2001) associative brand networks, Batey (2016) is more assertive with the engram connection. There is a similarity across all three executions in that tangible attributes and shorter more direct connections seem more prominent than any longer chains that reveal intangible associations. There is little evidence of attributes leading to benefits, or consequences, linking to values. All illustrate how attributes and associations relate to one another, keeping a record of a brand in the brain. Schacter (1996) refers to this as a pattern of connections. As such, despite Franzen and Bouwman's caution, as a mental construct, a brand engram is an interesting structure for capturing brand meaning. However, these connections between the tangible attributes and the intangible associations can be further explored for understanding brand meaning particularly in relation to the psychological, subcultural and cultural aspects which may result in longer chains of associations.

Franzen and Bowman (2001) assert that structuring brand meaning in a hierarchical order is more complicated than that suggested by the means-end theory. They accept that laddering research moves from the concrete to the abstract, however, along with their earlier criticisms, they assert that this may be a consequence of the research method used. Whilst they comment that little is known about how we order and structure brand

associations, they offer useful insight into how associations work in the brain. An association is the phenomenon of one memory element being linked with another – anything that can be connected in the brain. They use the expression “*fabric of associations*” (p.55) suggesting an interweaving process. More specifically they observe that the brain’s neurons, equipped with fibres, generate synapses which are a type of terminal that captures embranchments of other neurons. Neurons are interconnected via synaptic transferable neurotransmitters and each neuron participates in thousands of networks. Connections can be combined in an astronomical number of ways. They caveat that little is known about networks, and nothing specific been discovered on the real nature of the engram; indeed, they cite McEwan and Schmeck (1994) in that no-one has yet fathomed the whole process of sending and receiving.

There seems to be two approaches to mapping brand meaning within the literature. Scholars from both brand management and consumer behaviour would share the view that there is a laddering, sequential or evolutionary approach to unwrapping brands and that there is a continuum moving from the concrete to the abstract. The means-ends theory by Gutman (1982; 1997) informs brand models such as De Chernatony’s brand pyramid (2006) amongst others and adopts a hierarchical approach. Similarly, those adopting a consumer behaviour perspective such as Hirschman (1980;1998) and Holt (2004) take a hierarchical, sequenced and evolutionary position. Furthermore, this is evident with use and sign values (Marx 1930). Sign values are viewed as more dominant referents in society (Veblen 1925; Brown et al. 2003; Mick et al. 2004; Holt 2004; Campelo 2017) and can further structure social situations (Cherrier and Murray 2004; Gabriel and Lang 1995). In contrast, Lee (1993) and Gottdiener (2000) support a more holistic approach where use and sign value or material and symbolic meanings are intertwined. This reflects a pattern or fabric of associations reflected in engrams (Schacter 1996; Franzen and Bowman 2001; Batey 2016), which adopts a less structured, networked approach.

### **2.5.3 Literature Review Summary**

The literature review has so far been helpful in determining the meaning of a brand, brand meaning and the meaning of meaning. Five clear pillars of a conceptual framework have been established, that have evolved from Hirschman’s (1980; 1998) layers, that now include the sensorial, the functional, the psychological, the subcultural and the cultural. Furthermore, the structure of brand meaning has been discussed whether it be hierarchical

or adopting a flatter interwoven engram approach. A considered review of Hirschman's contribution to brand meaning now follows; this forms the basis of the study's conceptual framework, albeit this is updated with relevant recent contributions, making it appropriate for analysing 21<sup>st</sup> century brands.

## **2.6 Section Six: Conceptual Framework**

This section reviews the evolution of Hirschman's layers of meaning commencing in 1980 and culminating in 1998. It acknowledges the work of Donius (1994) and Franzen and Bowman (2001) and a brand meaning conceptual framework is proposed, reflecting the key pillars discussed in the literature review, updating Hirschman's work.

Hirschman's layers of meaning originated in her 1980 article "Attributes of Attributes and Layers of Meaning". This thinking contributes to her later more frequently cited work including the collaborative piece with Morris Holbrook, "Hedonic Consumption: Emerging Concepts, Methods and Propositions" published in 1982 and it is apparent that this 1980 article is foundational work which evolves over the years. This article is important for this study as it appears to be the first time that the terms 'tangible' and 'intangible' have been identified together and defined. Hirschman's (1980) layers of meaning also concur with previous scholars' assertions on the meaning of meaning such as Linton (1936); Lindesmith and Strauss (1949) and Gould and Kolb (1964). Her work has also been acknowledged by Franzen and Bouwman (2001) and has informed both Batey 'Brand Meaning' texts (2008; 2016).

Hirschman develops the discussion around her intangible associations to introduce her ideas related to her layers of meaning. She identifies, the cultural, the idiosyncratic and subcultural layers and explains that a common cultural layer comprises common beliefs shared across the same society. Idiosyncratic meanings come from unique associations for an individual consumer depending on their prior experiences and there will be high levels of variation from person to person. Moreover, a subcultural layer was inserted between the two recognising a common meaning across a subculture or an ethnic group. Figure One is her original diagram demonstrating her concentric layers of meaning radiating out from the tangible product attributes which are at the centre which initially infers some importance. However, her focus is on the common cultural intangible attributes, the subcultural intangible attributes and the idiosyncratic intangible attributes.

The tangible attributes do not receive as much attention possibly because they are viewed that these do not vary amongst people and across cultures. She observes that there is a continuum of shared meaning ranging from “*very high or perfect overlap across individuals*” for the tangible attributes, to “*very low or totally uncorrelated attribute associations*” at the idiosyncratic end of the continuum (Hirschman 1981, p.29). The continuum ranges from “*common, tangible objectivity to unique, intangible subjectivity*” (ibid, p.29).

In a subsequent paper produced the following year, she tests various configurations of the layers of meaning where, for example, one approach is to explore the proportions of culturally common, subculturally common and idiosyncratic associations. Her findings reveal a high proportion of idiosyncratic associations and it is apparent that she is more interested in the proportional representations for the layers rather than any relationships across the layers.

However, she finds that it appears to be more complex and less orderly than she originally assumed. The common cultural layer is called into question as there are fewer shared associations than hypothesised and meaning is more widely dispersed. Idiosyncratic meanings are clearly present, accounting for nearly one quarter of her sample. Meaning tends to be dispersed more widely for her well-known artifacts. The proportion of shared meaning is smaller than she originally envisaged. US culture was not as homogeneous as it can be portrayed which she finds surprising given the pervasiveness of mass media. It is a society of unique individuals.

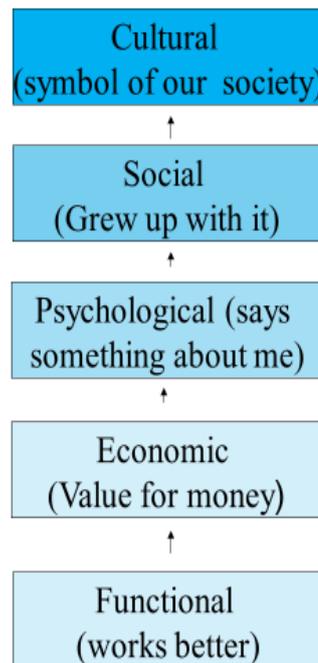
Hirschman’s focus here was never on the tangible attributes. Whilst these findings regarding the intangible attributes did not appear to influence her sequence of the layers of meanings at this stage, it appears that it is not until 1998 that she revisits her layers of meaning in a conclusive piece to Stern’s “Representing Consumers: Voices, Views and Visions” called “Afterwords”. Here she sequences the layers in a different way (see Figure Three) to that shown previously in Figure One.

The direct sensory or iconic impression relate to the tangible attributes. However, the idiosyncratic layer appears next replacing the cultural which now appears to be the final layer. There is little discussion as to why the layers have been re-ordered but this appears to confirm her thinking and this may be a possible consequence from her 1981 paper, where she found idiosyncratic meanings to have greater resonance than the cultural layer.

The 1998 discussion is more concerned with how sensory images are constructed in different areas to linguistic elements and people think in different ways – some think in words, some think in visual and auditory images or wordless pictures and some think in a combination of both approaches. She muses about trying to capture these type of consumer expressions rather than mere words. What is of interest is that she says:

*“In fact, many days I feel that I am less sure of things now than I was back in 1980 when I first proposed my multi-layered model of meaning. That model, born as it was during the reign of cognitive theory, very much reflected the hegemonic bias in favour of verbal conceptual associations – little sentences or phrases that were mentally stored as linkages to a central concept”*

Whilst the basis for her uncertainty may be about how we capture meaning expressed verbally from consumers, clearly there is evidence here of reflection. It is useful to consider other similar thinking around brand meaning to help enhance Hirschman’s framework. Franzen and Bouwman (2001) cite Donius (1994) who, in a brand equity workshop, constructed layers as illustrated in Figure 13.



*Figure 13: Conceptual Associative Model Donius (1994) as cited by Franzen and Bowman (2001)*

Statistical analysis by Donius (1994) showed that functional and economic meanings were the most desirable but psychological, social and cultural meanings offered the better

explanations for brand preference. As such, Donius proposed a hierarchy of meaning where functional and economic attributes act as boundary conditions, but the psychological, social and cultural meanings offered greater brand differentiation. It has been argued earlier within the functional attribute section that this can include price, so a separate economic layer is viewed as unnecessary for this research. Also, of note, is that Donius uses the term 'psychological' rather than 'idiosyncratic' and this too, has been argued earlier as a better term to use.

Franzen and Bowman (2001) recognise that different levels of meaning range from the concrete to the abstract, as recognised within the earlier means-ends discussion. The first level includes the physical and sensory attributes, the second, the functional implications and thirdly the symbolic meanings or values. Whilst they are critical of laddering research techniques, they acknowledge that the function of brands should be included in any appreciation of brand meaning.

Therefore, Hirschman's original layers of meaning have been adapted and the conceptual framework is shown in Figure 14. The terms tangible attributes and intangible associations reflect the adapted versions, updated from Hirschman (1980) as argued earlier in Section One. The tangible attributes consist of direct sensory and functional attributes. Firstly, a direct sensory layer is recognised, reflecting Hirschman's original approach, involving the five senses; Hirschman and Holbrook's (1982) afferent perspective is included here. A functional layer has been added as this should be recognised as a tangible attribute as argued earlier. Functional attributes include use value (Marx 1930) and levels of involvement (Rosenbaum-Elliott et al. (2011).

Within intangible associations the term 'idiosyncratic' has been replaced with 'psychological'. This includes references to the self-concept (McCracken 1988; Belk 1988; Dittmar 1992; Baumeister 1999) and memory (Franzen and Bowman 2001; Zaltman 2003; Braun-La-Tour et al. 2007; Plassman et al. 2007). Furthermore, subsequent subcultural associations include self-reference groups (Escalas and Bettman 2005) that align with the concept of brand communities (Brown et al.1993; Muniz and O'Guinn 2001). Cultural associations include the symbolic (Ligas and Cotte 1999; Solomon 2017), storytelling (Brown et al. 2003), gift giving (Larson and Watson 2001) and heritage (Bridge and Smith 2003, Hakala 2013).

There is a connection between the tangible attributes and the intangible associations and Gray and Balmer (1998) assert that the former is underpinned by the latter, illustrating that there is interplay between the two. As argued by De Chernatony (2006) and Kapferer (2008), tangible attributes tend to be relegated in importance, whilst the intangible associations are deemed to be more important, and the conceptual framework reflects this with labelling tangible attributes as ‘less important’ than intangible associations and the intangible associations as ‘more important’ than tangible attributes.

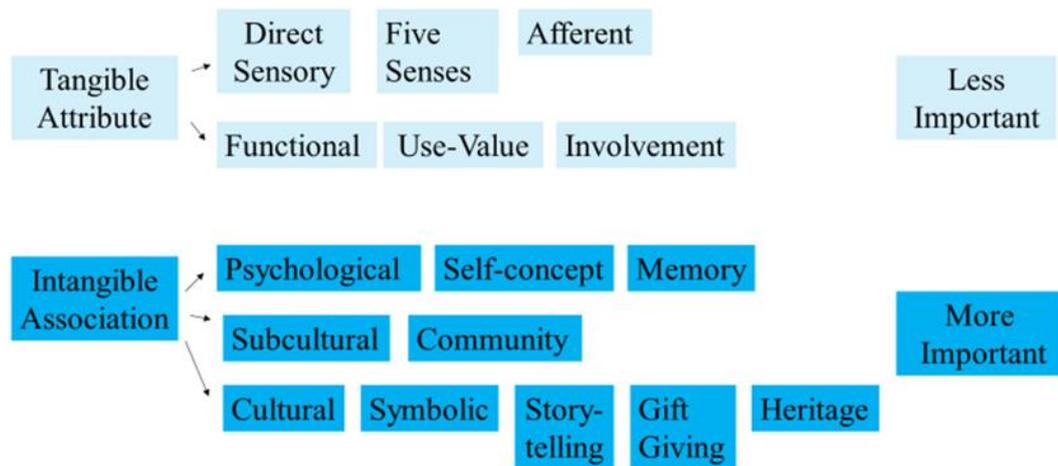


Figure 14: Brand Meaning Conceptual Framework

Franzen and Bouwman (2001) assert that brand meaning consists of both functional and abstract/symbolic meanings; local foods have both functional attributes (Pearson et al. 2013; Bianchi and Mortimer 2015) and cultural associations (Ilbery and Kneafsey 2000; Autio et al. (2013). The conceptual framework captures the relevant pillars of knowledge required to explore the tangible attributes of brand meaning and apply this within the context of local food brands.

The conceptual framework evolves Hirschman’s original interpretations of tangible and intangible attributes and her layers of meaning; these were important contributions to product meaning at her time of writing. Hirschman had reflected the dichotomous aspect of a brand and it was the first time that the terms tangible and intangible had been given attention in the context of product marketing. Her layers of meaning concurred with earlier scholars’ assertions on the meaning of meaning (Linton 1936; Lindesmith and Strauss 1949; Gould and Kolb 1964) and informed later scholars’ thoughts on brand meaning (Franzen and Bouwman 2001; Batey texts 2008; 2016).

In summary, the Brand Meaning Conceptual Framework updates Hirschman's contributions, so it is relevant for application for 21<sup>st</sup> century brands. It places more attention on the tangible attributes and has added a functional layer. The intangible associations have been enhanced to include later scholarly contributions to the psychological, subcultural and cultural layers. The framework reflects that more importance is attached to the intangible associations rather than the tangible attributes, evidenced from the earlier literature review. There have been many invaluable contributions to brand meaning knowledge from scholars over the last few decades, and whilst intangible associations have received much attention, this review has highlighted knowledge regarding the tangible attributes. This conceptual framework facilitates exploring how the senses play a part in creating meaning; it offers an opportunity to explore how the functionality of a brand may contribute to meaning. Moreover, it is of interest to gain insight as to how the tangible attributes connect with the intangible associations and understand how tangible attributes contribute towards any hierarchy of brand meaning.

## Chapter Three Methodology

### 3.0 Overview

This chapter deals with the methodological aspects of the research. This methodology includes the theoretical and philosophical assumptions upon which the research was based and the implications for the methods adopted. Firstly, the research aim and objectives are reviewed in relation to the conceptual framework, which is the link between the previous literature review chapter and this methodology chapter. Then the underpinning philosophy is discussed which takes an ontological constructivist viewpoint. Fitting with the philosophical stance, the research methodology and methods are qualitative. Quasi-ethnographic fieldwork methods are employed using pilot conversations within a farm shop environment, accompanied shopping trips in farm shops and food fairs, kitchen visits, in-depth interviews and observations. The sampling strategy is purposive with some snowball sampling. Data analysis identifies appropriate units of analysis and makes use of qualitative analysis software (NVivo 10) with themes and patterns being discerned as they emerge over stages of coding. Authenticity and trustworthiness are then discussed followed by ethics (see Figure 15).



Figure 15: Methodological Approach

### **3.1 Research Aim and Objectives**

The research aim is to explore the tangible attributes of brand meaning of local food brands. To assist with this, four research objectives (ROs) are created. They directly relate to the conceptual framework at the end of the previous chapter. This is fitting as Miles and Huberman (1994) assert that the conceptual framework explains the main concepts to be studied and the presumed relationship among them. The objectives are:

RO1. To explore the contribution of direct sensory attributes to brand meaning of local food brands.

This aligns with Hirschman's (1980) first layer of meaning. The role of the five senses is explored to understand each sense and how they may work in an afferent or efferent capacity (Hirschman and Holbrook 1982) for generating brand meaning for local food brands.

RO2. To explore the contribution of functional attributes to brand meaning of local food brands.

This is an additional tangible layer added to Hirschman's original framework, as justified within the earlier conceptual framework discussion. Functional, tangible components of local food brands are explored to understand if and how they create brand meaning.

RO3. To gain insight as to how these tangible attributes connect with intangible associations to create brand meaning.

Hirschman's layers of meaning relegated the initial (direct sensory) tangible layer with its contribution to meaning and focused on her subsequent intangible layers that were idiosyncratic, sub-cultural and cultural. Here the connections with both the tangible attributes and intangible associations are explored to see how brand meaning is created for local food brands.

RO4. To gain an in-depth understanding of how these tangible attributes contribute towards any hierarchy of brand meaning.

Following on from Hirschman's original hierarchical approach, this objective seeks to gain a deeper understanding of any hierarchical approach compared to alternative approaches such as developing an engram, to consider how brand meaning may be created.

### **3.2 Research Philosophy**

Consistent with the research aim and objectives, this research adopted an ontological world view which is constructionist, where society is perceived as a constantly evolving world created by the human mind and including multiple subjective realities (Denscombe 2010). This can reflect a society's culture, for example, and presents an image of social reality (Blaikie 1993 cited in Grix 2004) which is an appropriate context for exploring Brand Meaning theory, given its cultural and 'sociopsychological nature' (Batey 2008, p. xiv). Braun and Clarke (2013) suggest that if you want to understand the structure of meaning you explore it from this constructionist perspective. Moses and Knutson (2007) determine that constructivism relates to understanding context through interpreting human behaviour within a meaningful context set within a wider context of conventions and assumptions. They cite Quentin Skinner (1975) who suggests that this is a context which seeks to endow its constituent parts with meaning yet attaining its own meaning from the combination of constituent parts.

Parallels may be drawn with the earlier analysis of the meaning of meaning which is all about patterns of associations that one object has with others with which it is connected (see Section One of Chapter Two). In this research the constituent parts were detected through the consumer's stimulated senses, and gestures; these included any functionality of the object, personal past experiences, socially shared meanings and their associated cultural meanings and attachments. This shows some parallels with Hirschman's (1980;1998) layers - Direct Sensory, Idiosyncratic, Subcultural and Cultural. Brand meaning emerged because of how these associations connected with one another attaining its own meaning.

The research strategy employed in this study was holistic as it found patterns of associations across different experiences and to the overall context of the living world (Brown et al. 2003) and it used multiple methods to understand these meanings. Therefore, consistent with Moses and Knutson (2007), this research seeks to capture and gain insight into the meaning of these connections for the consumer or, in their words, the social agent.

To further focus on the ontological constructionist view, which understands the constant evolution of the world through the human mind and its subjective realities, the phenomenon studied here is the situation as to how local food brands present themselves

in individuals' direct experiences and awareness. Thus, the phenomenological approach is to understand people's perceptions, perspectives and understandings of local food brands. Epistemology is the study of the theory of knowledge and how it is accessed, acquired and gathered to ensure its reading of phenomena is superior to rival theories (Rosamond 2000 cited in Grix 2004). Epistemology can take one of two routes. One is an interpretivist approach and this research takes this direction in that it creates new knowledge through interpreting this phenomenon of local food brands and makes sense of reality (Denscombe 2010). This interpretivist approach allows the researcher to interpret the world through a humanist understanding to grasp the structure's subjective meaning.

The alternative epistemological viewpoint is that of positivism. This adopts an objective or direct approach. Of note is that Hirschman asserted that her initial layer of meaning, the tangible and direct sensory layer, should be assessed objectively. However, everything is mentally processed through the human mind. We detect the world through our senses; process them in our minds to create our own mental concepts of how we interpret reality. People perceive things differently which is exemplified by Weber (1949) noting here the influence of culture:

*“We are cultural beings, endowed with the capacity and the will to take a deliberate attitude to the world and to lend it significance”* (p.81)

Law-like or objective terms are inappropriate for this research although Hirschman (1980) noted that tangible attributes were *“objectively quantifiable characteristics of the product”* (p.10) but she was possibly influenced by earlier positivist approaches exemplified by her citation of Garner (1978). However, she adopted an interpretivist stance to her intangible layers – the cultural, subcultural and idiosyncratic associations. This research explores the tangible attributes which includes the direct sensory and the functional attributes but adopts an interpretivist approach to explore its significance. This approach uncovers perceptions and subjective meanings held by consumers and how they made connections with local food brands and aligned with the earlier ontological viewpoint that meaning is developed at an individual level and socially within a community. This approach is supported by Belk (1988), Hirschman (1992) and specifically Brown et al. (2003) and the latter argue that:

*“Consumers draw holistically from their lived experiences with products, history, mass media, and one another, as well as marketing sources, for the meanings they ascribe to brands” (p.30).*

This holistic approach should include the tangible aspects of meaning. Whilst the intangible associations have been explored through an interpretivist lens by many researchers for example Holbrook (1982), Brown (2003), Thompson (1989), Stern (1998), Belk (1998), Solomon (1999), Mick (2004) and Sherry (2005), from the 1980s onwards, so now the tangible attributes will benefit accordingly. The exploration of consumer perceptions of direct sensory and functionality of local food brands supports the use of subjective analysis with the aim of contributing to knowledge to further understand the tangibility of brand meaning.

Constructivism and interpretivism logically should take an inductive approach to ensure coherence, and insights for this study were developed from interpreting subjective qualitative data without preconceived hypotheses (Williamson and Bow 2002). Aligning with understanding how respondents consume local food and the meaning social agents place on those brands, this research involved the observation of empirical reality with general influences being induced (Collis and Hussey 2003). A flexible structure was followed enabling changes to be made as the research progresses. The focus was on experience as described from a first-person view and the researcher was part of the process aiming to understand the meanings given to local brands. Patterns were discerned as they emerged, and the research goal was to give a thematic description of the experience (Thompson et al. 1989). There were themes originating from the literature, research aims and objectives but within the analysis these were subsequently developed further (Berg 2009).

### **3.3 Research Methodology**

The methodological approach was qualitative, and this originates from anthropology, sociology, humanities. As such it is appropriate for exploring and understanding meaning (Creswell 2013). It embraces the inductive approach, appreciates subjectivities and accepts multiple realities and perspectives (O’Leary 2014). With this research, this approach aims to gather deep insights and delve into the complexities of interpreting and understanding local food brand meanings. This data was gathered within a context, in this

case that of local food brands based around Dorset. The research adopted a qualitative quasi-ethnographic approach (Elliott and Jankel-Elliott 2003) which was instrumental in understanding the lived experiences and processes of those interacting with local food brands. This assisted with understanding how meaning is constructed, fitting with the constructionist perspective. Rich data was generated consistent with the earlier research objectives outlined.

### **3.4 Research Design**

The research was designed to facilitate collecting detailed and occasionally complex data and descriptions from respondents. Multi-method complementary qualitative, quasi-ethnographic approaches were therefore adopted that allowed for enhanced data capture (Elliott and Jankel-Elliott 2003; Schensul et al. 2013). The purpose was to gain a holistic, in-depth understanding of consumers' attitudes towards local food brands, and as such, the study gathered empirical data through qualitative means in an appropriate local food context based around Dorset. This adhered to the earlier mentioned criteria (see Chapter One) that consumers were buying local food brands grown or processed from within 30 miles of where it was bought (FARMA 2015; Campaign to Protect Rural England 2018). Data capture was enhanced by discussion guides reflecting the key literature pillars evident in the conceptual framework and the research objectives.

The methods used may fall under the term "*little*" ethnography (Brewer 2000) which means that they are used in the context of fieldwork or "*ethnography– understood-as-fieldwork*" (ibid, p.18). As such aspects of participant observation were adopted which is the backbone of ethnography (Elliott and Jankel-Elliott 2003) and entails a direct involvement with talking and observing community members' lives (Agar 1996). In comparison, within the local food literature, Feldman and Hamm (2015) observed that only 16% of studies used qualitative methods, and those adopted interviews and focus groups as their methods.

### **3.5 Research Methods**

The tools and techniques used to capture and analyse research data encompassed consumer-focused, ethnographic fieldwork methods (de Kervenoael et al. 2014). More

specifically the methods reflected a quasi-ethnographic approach (Elliott and Jankel-Elliott 2003) as it would have been prohibitive to have carried out more conventional ethnographic methods over a long period of time, because of time and expense constraints. For a purer ethnographic approach, an extended timescale spent in the field of around two years is suggested by Wolcott (1995). Moreover Bryman (2004) asserts that the researcher should be immersed in one social setting for this extended period albeit Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) are more flexible, allowing for a small number of contexts with less time therefore spent in each. The researcher has a familiarity with this territory because of her earlier professional practice and teaching, and a familiarity with local food brands, the local culture and potential venues available.

The research methods included some initial piloted purposeful conversations (Burgess 1984), in a farm shop; accompanied shopping trips to farm shops and food fairs; kitchen visits; and in-depth interviews. Some interviews took place in context appropriate cafés, for example they benefitted from a heavily biased local food menu; or at venues that were not particularly context appropriate such as University cafés or at respondents' homes. Figure 16 illustrates the combination of methods used which adopted features of a quasi-ethnographic approach that included immersion in the local food context and its natural occurring setting e.g. farm shops, food fairs and local food cafés. Observation and reflective notes were captured to underpin these methods. In order to give useful context to these quasi-ethnographic approaches, firstly the timing of the research is outlined, followed by the sampling strategy.

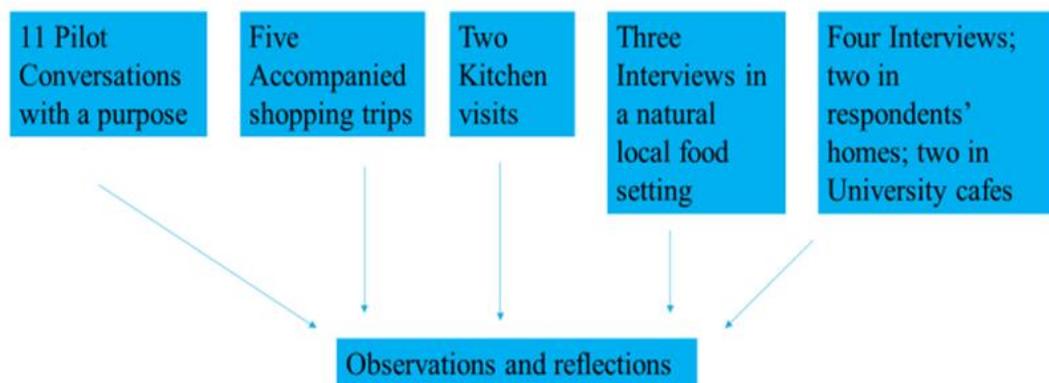


Figure 16: Quasi-ethnographic research tools

### **3.5.1 Time Horizon**

The time horizon was cross-sectional, obtaining data over a set and relatively short period of time whilst in a variety of environments. Research was conducted between the 13<sup>th</sup> March and 24<sup>th</sup> October 2015. There was no specific sequence to the above methods; rather the researcher worked with the participants accommodating their preferences for timing and the nature of the interaction.

### **3.5.2 Sampling Strategy**

Firstly, the nature of the sample was determined from a variety of useful sources. Whilst consumers of local food vary there is support that family households with older children aged 10-15 (Mintel 2011) tend to be the greatest consumers in this local area and they would therefore form an appropriate population to sample. Blake et al. (2010) refer to so-called “middle class” Britons who like to cook food with raw ingredients, have the requisite shopping skills and are more engaged with local food brands than lower income households. Feldman and Hamm (2015) add that it tends to be older, wealthier people living in rural areas that are the greatest consumers of local food. Further insight came from the DEFRA (2008) segmentation study which was for potential respondents to exhibit engagement and enthusiasm for the purchase, preparation and consumption of local food brands. This may require some specific shopping skills and involve some effort to overcome the barriers to purchase.

Secondly the sampling strategy aimed to recruit respondents in a manner appropriate to the study, which was non-probability sampling given the qualitative research setting. A purposive sampling method was adopted where the sample is ‘*hand-picked*’ for the research (Denscombe 2008 p.17). The selection criteria involved an initial conversation with the potential respondent to ascertain their fit with the sampling criteria, with the aim of gaining their in-depth understanding of brand meaning of local food brands. The researcher also had potential venues in mind such as specific farm shops and local food fairs selling local food brands produced within a 30-mile radius; the benefit of this approach is that it was economic, allowing a focus on particularly communities, places and events conducive to the research aims and objectives.

Felicity’s Farm shop in west Dorset was the initial starting point for recruitment of local food consumers. Consumers frequented it as their local food store, albeit it is on a major

route through to Devon and Cornwall; as such it is used by some consumers as a frequent stopping off point for a break on their journey. Appendix Four gives details of these initial pilot participants interviewed with some brief demographic information.

The recruitment strategy entailed exploring links with organisations with whom the researcher was in contact, together with contacting suitable respondents already known to her. Links with the Bournemouth and Poole Sustainable Food City Partnership provided potential respondents from their network. The partnership is a food community dedicated to supporting the consumption of nutritious sustainable food which is locally grown (Bournemouth and Poole Sustainable Food City Partnership 2018). This was self-selection as respondents identified themselves to participate (Daymon and Holloway 2010). All the following respondents are referred to by their pseudonyms and four were generated from the partnership, namely Elena, Harold, Hilary and Rebecca; the former two agreeing to being interviewed, the latter two agreeing to kitchen visits. A request was placed on the Dorset Food and Drink website (Dorset Food and Drink 2017) which introduced Samuel (Hive Beach Café, Burton Bradstock) and Beryl (home interview). The researcher deliberately intended that the choice of venue be decided by the applicant as this would enable better quality data to be generated in the environment where applicants were most comfortable.

The researcher's own network generated Phyllis (accompanied shopping trip to two farm shops), Julie (interview at her home close to a farm shop), Freda, Marjorie and Eleanor (Leigh Food Fair) and Flora (interview at the Salt Pig Café, Wareham). From an initial contact, snowball sampling followed to assist with providing suitable respondents. Snowballing involves the emergence of the sample through a point of reference from one person to the next (Bryman and Bell 2011; Denscombe 2008) which allowed Jilly (interview at the Salt Pig Café, Wareham) to be introduced by Flora. This is an effective and quick technique used within small scale research projects and enabled a credible and easy introduction to Jilly. It is highly compatible with purposive sampling.

This strategy reflected Miles and Huberman's (1994) assertion that samples are not completely pre-specified but evolve once fieldwork commences. Practical issues were also considered as time and access were limited; as Miles and Huberman (1994, p.31) state: "*Very seldom does a start-up sampling frame survive the lovely imperfection and intractability of the field*", albeit it was possible to deliver a suitable frame of respondents that fully met the research design. Similarly, it was not possible to pre-determine which

tools were going to be used in advance and this was dependent on the participants' preferences. Appendix Five summarises the main sample respondents' details including some supporting demographic data and the nature of the research tool used, and Appendix Six included further respondent details contained within the summary of the observation and reflective notes, further supporting their inclusion within the sample.

The sample was of sufficient size to capture a range of perspectives influenced by the nature of the enquiry. Saturation is when gathering any additional data fails to generate new information (Morse 1995) and no longer adds richness to the researcher's understanding (O'Leary 2014). This began to occur from the interview with Beryl and Jilly taking place within late August 2015, albeit a further interview and accompanied shopping trip were conducted subsequently.

Clearly the sample was not representative of the whole population, but this was not the goal of this exploratory research project. Whilst this may be construed as a disadvantage (Sharma 2008) this research aimed to gain deep insights into the topic and objectives. Nonetheless reflection took place as to how representative the sample was (Miles and Huberman 1994), including those conversed with in the pilot, in relation to local food brand consumers. Participants all met the sample criteria however a potential outlier was Beryl (55-64 years); she was very focused on supporting local farmers and producers and critical of the supermarket practices. She differed from other respondents in that she seemed not quite as engaged and enthusiastic about local food brands, and indifferent to their taste, exemplified by her discussion of the local brand Coastal Cheddar. The following comment was quite telling:

*“Yeh I don't think it necessarily tastes any better, but it's just- it's good, but not necessarily tasting any better. I mean as I say we don't always buy it, if it's three weeks to go before the next farmers' market, we'll just get whatever's in Tesco's.”*

Furthermore, the conversation spent more time on growing (russet apples) and rearing (keeping chickens) her own local food contrasting with the more engaged conversations from other participants about local food brands. However, her behaviour helped to validate the representativeness of the rest of the sample (Miles and Huberman 1994) as it provided a contrast to the other respondents' enthusiasm for local food brand consumption.

Finally, mindful of the correct ethical practices, each respondent was given a participant information sheet to give them more background as to the nature of the study and asked to sign a consent form. The research ethic section at the end of this chapter gives further details as to these processes and the ethical practices upheld.

Figure 17 shows an operationalisation table that summarises the research methods used across the research objectives, together with the sample and timing.

Research Objective	Research Methods	Sample	Time Horizon
RO1 Direct Sensory	Pilot Conversations	Middle class h/holds	
RO2 Functionality	Shopping Trips	who enjoy cooking	13/3/15-
RO3 Connections	Kitchen Visits	With raw ingredients &	24/10/2015
RO4 Hierarchy	Interviews	have shopping skills	
	Observations/Reflections		

Figure 17: Operationalisation Table

### 3.6 Data Collection

The quasi-ethnographic methods and contexts used here allowed for different perspectives and yielded rich data within a suitable time frame. This was an opportunity to conduct field work within a region with a solid reputation for producing local food brands and use quasi-ethnographic methods, contrasting with the conventional quantitative approaches as adopted by previous local food researchers. The aim was to achieve a “*thick description*” (Geertz 1973, p.10) of respondents’ narrations of local food brands and interpret their meanings. Fitting with the quasi-ethnographic approach the researcher was able to forge relationships with respondents quickly as she had some knowledge of local food brands, the local area and an empathetic understanding of the shopping and cooking processes involved. Whilst there was clear idea of the intended methods, it was opportune to firstly conduct a pilot study, specifically for the accompanied shopping trips, as it seemed sensible to explore how these would work in the field. A pilot discussion guide (Appendix Seven) was compiled to reflect the key pillars covered in the conceptual framework and the research objectives.

### 3.6.1 Pilot Studies

Pilot studies can support the choice of method, but they can also identify and address practical issues (van Teijlingen et al. 2001; Wilson 2011). These are important to carry out to ensure that methods are robust and identify any additional or unidentified issues which need to be incorporated into the study. Uses can include giving the researcher useful experience; considering the structure and flow of the questions and identifying any approaches that make respondents feel uncomfortable or that they do not understand (Bryman and Bell 2011). Given the natural environment and therefore unpredictable setting of quasi-ethnographic research particularly with the accompanied shopping trip element, pilot studies within Felicity's Farm Shop in west Dorset were conducted to identify and address any practical issues (LeCompte and Schensul 2010). This was a suitable setting for familiarisation with the local food brand environment and social context contributing to brand meaning. A preliminary site visit was conducted to meet Felicity, gain her permission and ensure she understood the research process. This was an opportunity to better understand the field of the research and the structure the study should follow (Murchison 2010). The farm shop was subsequently visited over a period of two days.

The pilot involved conversations with a purpose (Burgess 1984). This may be described by Agar (1996, p.158) as "*hanging out*" in a context conducive to the ethnographic fieldwork and being as close to the experience as possible (Gertz 1973). These conversations may be aligned with an informal interview with reference to a loosely structured discussion guide reflecting the research objectives and key literature themes (see Appendix Seven). This consisted of a list of relevant topics from which to choose and use as and when the moment seemed appropriate (Elliott and Jankel Elliott 2003). It also included the requirement to firstly show a potential respondent the participant information sheet and gain their consent. Informant responses were audio recorded, and it was possible to accompany the respondent around the shop on most occasions. Some 18 respondents across seven households were involved with this piloting activity and they were judged to be typical local food brand consumers (see Appendix Four).

Whilst the research was in an appropriate setting it became clear that there were some disadvantages. Firstly, it felt that the research process involved interrupting people in their shopping tasks and this may have been intrusive, although most respondents were very cooperative. Nonetheless, it was not an environment for a developing the discussion and

timing was limited. Another challenge was trying to capture the observation element whilst in discussion with the participant as ideally observations should merge with discussions. The observation element should involve noting participant behaviour throughout the study, using behavioural cues to suggest unspoken motivations (O'Reilly 2011). Respondent behaviour should be noted including interaction with the brands and store surroundings to enhance data collection (Keegan 2009). However, in practice talking to the participant and simultaneously observing their behaviour was difficult to capture albeit the conversational element was useful and reliable. This was partly overcome by recording field notes (Spradley 1980) from the pilot (see Appendix Eight). These evolved in subsequent encounters into making additional observations including some reflections immediately after the interaction, which helped further validate the data when re-reading the transcripts, by overlaying this further observational and reflective material.

The pilot was very useful in developing the approach for further accompanied shopping trips (see Learning from Pilot in Appendix Nine). A key learning was that much richer data would be gathered by recruiting respondents in advance and managing their expectations as to what was required, and the time involved. Whilst the foundations for the initial discussion guide were sound, there was an opportunity to develop the discussion guide further for subsequent encounters, to reflect a more detailed version of the conceptual framework and links to research objectives. This was a guide, and the researcher was conscious not to restrict the natural flow of conversation. Finally, alongside offering some helpful insights into research approaches for the main study and the development of the discussion guide, the pilot also generated some useful data.

### **3.6.2 Participant Observation**

The nature of the participant observation was established from reflections from this pilot. Participant observation involves data gathering by immersion in the daily life of respondents in their natural setting, watching, observing and talking to them to discover their social meanings, interpretations and activities (Brewer 2000; Bryman 2004) and there can be varying levels of engagement. Here the researcher adopted an observer-as-participant perspective (Gold 1958) which is not as immersed as a complete participant, nor is it at the other end of the spectrum where one is a complete observer. This allowed for practical data collection whilst minimising the effect on the researched by the

researcher. Being either a complete observer, or complete participant hinders this information gathering (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983) and being there at the point of the consumer making his/her decisions, the researcher was at times able to empathise and probe, enabling richer data to be gathered.

Typically, the data gathered from these observations was gleaned from notes and reflections after each encounter, which were recorded, then transcribed. These commenced with field notes taken after the pilot sessions at Felicity's Farm Shop (see Appendix Eight). The field notes adapted Spradley's (1980) approach and recorded the space, actors, activity, act, event, time, goal and feelings. This was useful for capturing the overall setting of Felicity's Farm Shop and for establishing, where appropriate, the contexts of subsequent encounters.

These observations and reflections significantly contributed to learning and could be applied to the following interaction, which is an iterative inductive approach. This is essential to ethnographic work, constantly refining research materials throughout the process (O'Reilly 2011; Braun and Clarke 2013). Therefore, observational and reflective notes were taken immediately after each accompanied shopping trip, kitchen visit, and interview and this combination of methods assisted with triangulating the data, as independent sets of data collection methods can help support a finding or, at least, not necessarily disagree with it (Miles and Huberman 1994). Examples of these notes can be found in Appendix Six, which also includes the respondent's profile data, justifying their inclusion in the sample.

Equipped with the learning from the pilot, a series of accompanied shopping trips, kitchen visits and in-depth interviews were embarked upon. As noted, there was constant reflection (Braun and Clarke 2013) throughout these interactions, to allow for further adjustment throughout the process. Therefore, the research approach was fine-tuned with every participant, yet care was taken to keep the overall approach consistent so as not to affect trustworthiness (Shenton 2003) and to ensure the research objectives were met. Whilst useful data was gathered there was awareness of the high risk of researcher subjectivity and potential bias through both data collection and analysis (Hennink et al. 2011) appreciating that in this qualitative setting, attaining objectivity is challenging. Therefore, the researcher wrote a reflexive statement which captures her reflections about the implications of the research methods used, and any biases that may be brought to the research process (Bryman (2004). This allows the researcher to continually reflect on any

bias she brings (see also 3.8.5 Confirmability). This statement recognises the researcher's world view and bias and is found in Appendix Ten. However, this statement should be placed in the context of this research's ontological constructivist world view, which is through the researcher's mind and its subjective realities; as such it adopts an interpretivist approach to grasp the subjective brand meanings of local food brands.

### **3.6.3 Accompanied shopping trips**

Conversations and observations have taken place within the context of where people live and carry out their day-to-day activities such as shopping or cooking. These adopted a flexible approach to access the meanings at play and subsequent analysis involved attributing meanings to describe and explain participants' actions. Three accompanied shopping trips and two kitchen visits were conducted where the researcher was an active participant. This was an excellent opportunity to gather data within the natural environments of the farm shops and respondents' kitchens which gave an additional depth and provided a distinctive strength to this strategy (Atkinson and Hammersley 2007).

The initial pilot conversations paved the way to a first successful accompanied farm shop visit with Phyllis. Washingpool Farm shop in west Dorset was chosen as the first farm shop destination, located just outside Bridport and not on any major route. The intention here was to accompany the respondent around the farm shop conversing about the local brands that were happened upon. The discussion guide had been evolved (see Appendix 11) through learning and reflections from the pilot. It captured the themes from the conceptual framework and the research objectives. It allowed for more questions and prompting around these themes, as more time was available for discussion. Prior to stepping into Washingpool Farm Shop in west Dorset, a conversation took place with Phyllis about her shopping habits and family needs. Then there was the accompanied shop around Washingpool Farm shop, lasting approximately an hour and a half with both respondent and researcher being fully immersed in the experience. Subsequently Phyllis agreed to visit nearby Felicity's Farm Shop as she was curious to compare environments. The advantages of this approach compared to the pilot were apparent in that Phyllis knew in advance what was entailed and had the time and inclination to converse about local brands. The fieldwork process was also flexible, allowed an opportunity to decide where to focus and to respond to any serendipitous events such as responding to a demonstrator's approach regarding her brands. Observational and reflective notes were taken

immediately after both events which proved to be the best alternative to trying to capture acts and activities whilst the researcher was also engaged with conversations. This accompanied shopping trip proved successful and further trips were organised with Freda and her friends, Eleanor and Marjorie around Leigh Food Fair in July and Hilary to Wimborne Food Fair during October.

### **3.6.4 Kitchen Visits**

In a similar immersive setting both Hilary and Rebecca were visited in their kitchens in April and June respectively. The objective here was to observe and converse about the food preparation in the respondents' kitchens. As it was anticipated there would be an absence of stimuli and props evident in the farm shops, a selection of photographs of local food brands (see Appendix 12) were made available and the discussion guide included potential discussion points around the prompt materials. These proved to be an excellent start to the conversation as respondents were happy to discuss the brands and their properties such as the packaging and how they felt about them.

The first kitchen visit was with Hilary and produced a flowing balanced conversation. Hilary had a good understanding of local food brands resulting in both researcher and respondent being highly engaged. Observation of what Hilary was doing merged into the conversation, demonstrating the flexible nature of this quasi-ethnographic approach. Hilary's method of cooking and use of ingredients generated enthusiastic conversation and the data captured as a result was significantly enhanced (Schensul et al. 2013). As O'Reilly (2011) supports, it was a blend of studying the unknown and it was relatively unstructured. Further useful data was captured within her observation and reflective notes taken immediately after the interaction (see Appendix Six). The subsequent visit to Rebecca's kitchen provided an interesting contrast with Hilary's; Hilary's movements around her kitchen were fluid and practised. She could reach for a saucepan whilst keeping eye contact and she was clearly familiar with her kitchen layout and where things were. In contrast Rebecca had just moved into her kitchen and was finding her way around. As such her kitchen craft was not as fluid, but Rebecca demonstrated a very good knowledge of local brands and a good selection was evident in her store cupboards. This suggests that engagement with local food brands is not just for those instinctive and highly skilled cooks but reaches out to those willing to have a go and cook from scratch. Preparation of great food can include crafting raw ingredients, but it can also include

access to a great store cupboard offering complementary ingredients to enhance a dish, and some readymade items that require little additional preparation.

Hence both kitchen visits and the accompanied shopping trips enabled rich data to be gathered as discussions with participants established their own views and meanings as they articulated concepts in their own words. When there was the opportunity, some probing questions were asked, to try to understand the layers of meaning as it can be taken for granted so it needed unwrapping carefully. Within the appropriate context of the farm shop or food fair or kitchen, it was opportune to involve the props (e.g. local food brands or their photographs, cooking implements etc.) and address the social context which contributed to the meaning and substance of participants' views and constructions.

This rich data was gathered as the researcher as an observer-as-participant (Gold 1958) and an actor in the natural setting where local food brands were purchased and consumed. To complement this data collection, in-depth interviews were undertaken, to further understand respondents' behaviour.

### **3.6.5 Interviews with no natural local food setting**

To accompany the shopping trips and kitchen visits, a further seven in-depth interviews took place, with four taking place in a university café or a home visit and the remaining three taking place in the context of local food cafes. An interview can be defined as the "*elicitation of research data through the questioning of respondents*" (Bloor and Wood 2006 p.124) and was shaped in part by the discussion guide (see Appendix 11), and in part by the topics that emerged throughout the interview. The style in all venues was informal and conversational. This complemented the quasi-ethnographic fieldwork that included more casual conversations (Elliott and Jankel Elliott 2003) and more unstructured informal talk that was balanced between the researcher and participant. The guide helped with ensuring that appropriate topics, some terminology (able to be easily explained) and questions were included (Wallen and Fraenkel 2001) which were covered in the conceptual framework. This basis of this guide was also used in previous encounters, and not always strictly adhered to as the conversation ebbed and flowed according to the respondent and his/her topics of conversation. Nonetheless it did ensure that all the key topics pertinent to the research objectives were covered in each interview.

Within all interviews, focus was placed on understanding the participant experiences, and what they made of these and their meanings (Seidman 2012). There are advantages to this individual interview method as there were fewer distractions as found in the field. They were easy to co-ordinate and offered a greater depth of insight, particularly when compared to say, focus groups; there was a free exchange of information with no pressure to conform to any other influences from any other parties. The researcher was again mindful of her own world view and bias, as captured within her reflexive statement (Appendix Ten) and the personal reflections at the end of every encounter provided an opportunity to consider this.

The observations and reflections noted that interactions at the university cafés, with Harold and Elena, did not benefit from a local food brand context and created their own environment. They were fit for purpose and provided a convenient location in which to meet and ensure the respondent was comfortable; however, these were not environments where local food brands could be found. This contrasted with other encounters in farm shops or food fairs, albeit the prompt materials were helpful. Occasionally, the university cafés were busy, and Harold was particularly softly spoken so it was difficult to hear what he was saying at times. Nonetheless, they provided convenient meeting places, particularly as it was not possible, on every occasion, to meet a respondent in a local food brand setting.

Interviews in respondents' homes were more successful with less opportunity for distractions. A session with Julie was insightful and she spoke of her experiences with her local farm shop near Highcliffe, prompting a visit after the interview to understand the context further. Beryl was interviewed at her home in Broadmayne near Dorchester.

### **3.6.6 Interviews taking place in a natural local food setting**

Three interviews were held in cafés serving and selling local food brands. These were situated further west in Dorset including the Hive Beach Café at Burton Bradstock and the Salt Pig café in Wareham. The context of both these venues and the ability to consume local food was conducive to discussing local food brands, with good conversations taking place with Jilly and Flora in particular. Interviews in all settings were helpful as they offered the opportunity to further probe meanings particularly those of the senses. Occasionally simplistic and automatic responses were given particularly about taste. This

was a direct sensory element that needed further exploration though probing particularly as it has been previously viewed as objective (Hirschman 1980) and has been subject to quantitative methodological approaches such as taste tests (Hirschman and Holbrook 1982). Respondents tended to initially struggle with describing taste however probing revealed some interesting deeper descriptions of taste with useful cross modular textural references emerging such as 'creamy' or 'earthy'. Together with the accompanied farm shop/food fair and kitchen visits, these proved to be highly effective means of data collection.

There was no pre-determined sequence of farm shop visits, kitchen visits or interviews, and a mainly purposive sampling approach was adopted with fieldwork conducted with the participants' timing and convenience in mind. In total and including the pilot data, over 32 hours of data was collected across 24 households including conversations, short interviews, observations, accompanied shopping trips and kitchen visits. The fieldwork research was voice recorded for later transcription and field notes were taken throughout to support encounters (O'Reilly 2011).

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

This is based on the qualitative data analysis framework from Miles and Huberman (1994). It is highly dependent on words elicited from capturing the content of the accompanied farm shop/food fair shopping trips, the kitchen visits and the resulting observations and reflections together with the interviews. Through these words these situations can be comprehended; words are the way to explain ourselves and create our world and words can help defend ourselves. Therefore, with qualitative data analysis and presentation, the task is to find patterns within those words and to demonstrate those patterns to others for their inspection (Maykut and Morehouse 1994).

#### **3.7.1 Units of Analysis**

A systematic approach for data collection through quasi-ethnographic methods and interviews was adopted. In turn the data was systematically analysed. The data collected was through open-ended discussions with some questioning allowing respondents to articulate their perceptions and experiences spontaneously and freely. Miles and

Huberman (1994) recommend creating codes prior to fieldwork (a priori codes) which are pre-determined units of analysis.

From the earlier conceptual framework, as adapted from Hirschman (1980; 1998) Figure 18 illustrates examples of units of analysis relating to both tangible attributes and intangible associations. This encompasses key elements required by the objectives as it includes the tangible attributes (direct sensory and functional attributes) and the intangible associations (idiosyncratic, sub-cultural and cultural).

<b>Tangible Attributes</b>		<b>Intangible Associations</b>		
<b>Direct Sensory</b>	<b>Functional</b>	<b>Psychological</b>	<b>Subcultural</b>	<b>Cultural</b>
Taste, sight haptic, smell, auditory	Functional can include, Price, Ingredients, Packaging, Local economy, Provenance and Health.	Self-concept	Community	Symbolic
Afferent	Use Value	Memory		Storytelling
	Involvement			Gift Giving
				Heritage

Figure 18: Units of analysis derived from the conceptual framework

Each unit of analysis has been defined, and where possible its literature roots have been established. For example, the term “afferent” was coined by Hirschman and Holbrook (1982, p. 92) in the context of Direct Sensory exemplified by a product taste test. “Ingredients” similarly is justified from the literature as Hirschman (1980, p.8) says:

*“Sewell investigated consumer perceptions and preferences for a product class in which functional attributes (as he termed attributes such as product **ingredients**, price and size) were held constant...”*

These units of analysis create strong links to the data. This is an inductive study, but the topic guide helps capture the participants’ world view experiences according to the focus of enquiry and provides some structure. This in turn assists making sense of the data

through coding and framing. An example of the application of the units of analysis is illustrated by Julie (55-64 years) as to how the senses are instrumental in creating a sensorial, tangible attribute.

*“I’ve seen (**sight**) in supermarkets that sometimes broccoli has gone a bit yellowy on the crown and feels a bit floppy and rubbery (**texture**), whereas there [at the farm shop] it’s firm (**texture**) and very green (**sight**) and feels (**cognitive processing**) very fresh (**tangible attribute**).”*

Nonetheless, other codes emerged from respondents’ words such as “quality”. The original recording was listened to as the transcript was initially reviewed and the occasion recalled. With both the transcript and the context in mind the coding commenced and actioned on NVivo (see 3.7.3 Phase Two, Figure 22). Rich quotes were selected which may have generated several codes as respondents invariably covered different facets as they spoke. The coding was constantly being reviewed to ensure that the whole spectrum of codes was being used. Overall around 130 codes were generated (for examples see 3.7.3 Phase Two Figure 21) with some overlap. For example, “Idiosyncratic” had links with “Subjective Perception” and “Psychological” and they were subsequently merged as part of a distilling phase.

### **3.7.2 Thematic Analysis Approach**

Thematic analysis is used for identifying, analysing, and reporting themes within the data (Braun and Clarke 2006). It is the most commonly used method of analysis in qualitative research analysis (Thomas and Harden 2008; Guest et al. 2012). This analytical method fits well with the theoretical assumptions and the research objectives. Miles and Huberman (1994) have recognised a distinctive thematic coding approach with an accompanying set of procedures. A process of inductive reasoning develops categories of meaning and relationships between categories are derived from the data. Through a “top-down” coding approach (Hayes 1997; Boyatzis 1998), theoretical ideas are identified, driven by an analytical interest, that can be used to analyse the data, or the data is used to explore ideas (Braun and Clark 2013). It is an accessible form of analysis, has flexibility and is relatively easy to use. To achieve a sound analytical approach, the processes outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994) were adhered to, supported by the qualitative data analysis software NVivo 10.

### 3.7.3 Using Qualitative Data Analysis Software (NVivo 10)

NVivo 10 is a computer aided qualitative data analysis system (CAQDAS) and a well-recognised tool for organising data. When using qualitative data analysis software such as this, the computer is used as a tool for efficiency and not for conducting analysis and drawing conclusions, so it is supportive analytical tool that leaves the analyst very much in charge (Fielding and Lee 1998). The logging of codes, the systematic data reduction, discernment of patterns and creation of conceptual categories showing thought progression, facilitates all stages of the analytical process to be transparent and traceable, allowing for a comprehensive audit trail to be produced. This is more rigorous than a manual mapping exercise. The software aids transparency and produces an audit trail that helps with trustworthiness. Disadvantages of using data analysis software are potential data loss and over-coding. The threat of data loss was addressed by regular backups of data files. Any over-coding was rectified at a later distilling phase of analysis.

Miles and Huberman's (1994) practical guidelines for the stages of qualitative analysis have been used to inform the strategic approach to analyse the data and Figure 19 demonstrates how this reflects the supportive processes steps taken within the NVivo 10. Miles and Huberman's (1994) seven-step approach to conducting thematic analysis is displayed in the first column, while the second column shows the key stages of coding as the process moved from initial participant-led descriptive coding, to the secondary coding which was more interpretive in nature and as such was both participant and researcher led. There was a final abstraction to themes which was researcher-only led. The third column shows the iterative nature of the tasks as the coding, analysis and reporting proceeds towards the conclusion.

Miles & Huberman (1994)  Practical Application in NVivo	Key stages	Iterative process throughout analysis
<p>Phase 1: Transcribing data, reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas. Import data into the NVivo data management tool</p> <p>Transcribing submissions and formatting demographic and other profiling information into a single table for import into a computer aided qualitative data analysis system (NVivo).</p>	<p>Data Management <i>(Open and hierarchal coding through NVivo; participant-led descriptive coding)</i></p> 	<p>Assigning data to refined concepts to portray meaning</p> 
<p>Phase 2: Open Coding.</p> <p>Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collecting data relevant to each code.</p>	<p>C 1 Descriptive Accounts <i>(Reordering, 'coding on' and annotating through NVivo; participant and researcher led)</i></p> 	<p>Refining and distilling more abstract concepts</p>  <p>Assigning Data to themes/concepts to convey meaning</p> 
<p>Phase 3: Categorisation of codes - collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme. This involves re-categorisation of codes from phase one open coding into NVivo 10's Phase Two Analysis.</p>	<p>Explanatory Accounts <i>(Extrapolating deeper meaning, drafting summary statements and analytical memos through NVivo; researcher-only led.)</i></p> 	<p>Assigning meaning</p> 
<p>Phase 4: Data reduction /consolidation: generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.</p>	<p>Phase 5 – Writing Analytical Memos</p>	<p>Generating themes and concepts</p>
<p>Phase 5 – Writing Analytical Memos</p>	<p>Phase 6 – Validating Analytical Memos</p>	
<p>Phase 6 – Validating Analytical Memos</p>		
<p>Phase 7 – Synthesising Analytical Memos</p>		

Figure 19: Stages and Process involved in Qualitative Analysis: Miles and Huberman (1994) Practical Application in NVivo

The stages are as follows:

**Phase 1** – This involved the **transcription** of the interviews, accompanied shopping trips, kitchen visits, farm shop interviews and observations. This is accompanied by **profiling information** including demographic characteristics. All transcriptions and observation notes were imported into NVivo 10 and read and re-read. Figure 20 demonstrates how this was captured.

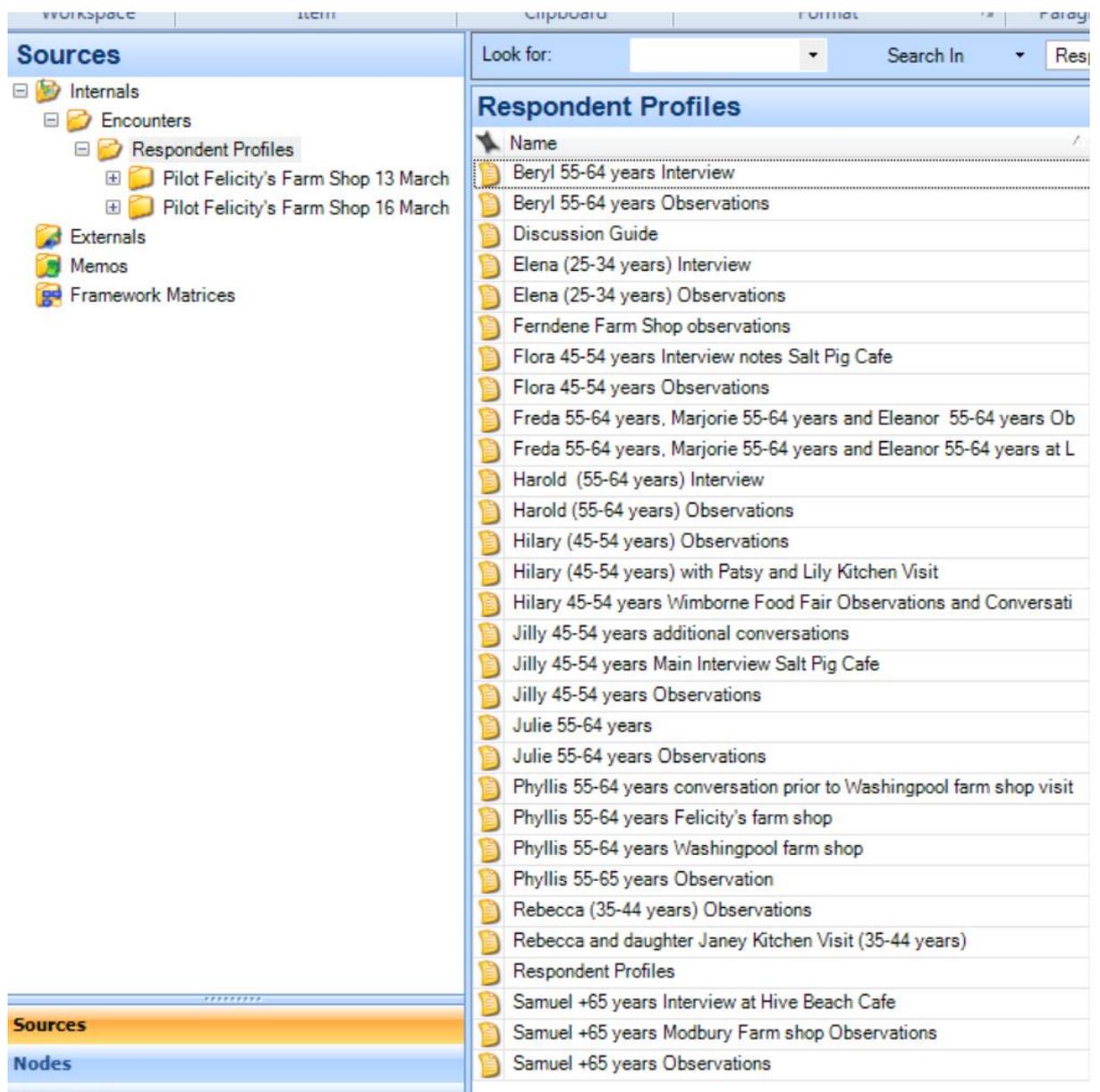


Figure 20: Respondent data capture including transcriptions of interviews and observations.

There were several 55-64-year-old respondents, but this aligns with Feldman and Hamm's (2015) assertion that it tends to be older, wealthier, rural dwellers that are the

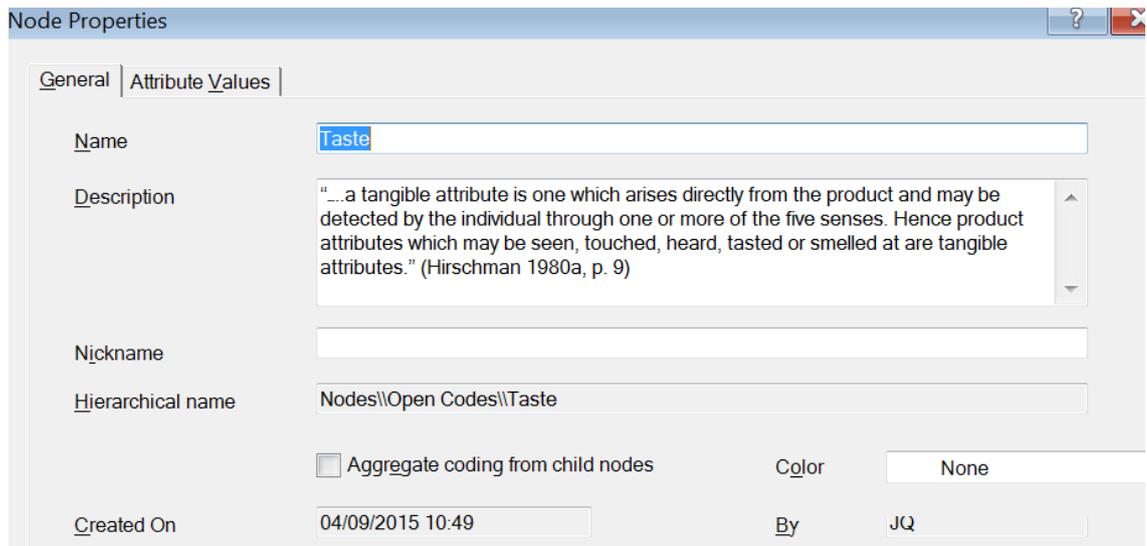
greatest consumers of local food. There were more women respondents, but they exhibit Blake et al.'s (2010) requisite skills that include cooking food with raw ingredients and have shopping skills.

**Phase 2** – A starting point was to create broad participant driven **open coding** of the interviews from their original chronology into initial non-hierarchical codes supported with definitions to deconstruct the data into initial discrete ‘incidents’ (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) or ‘units’ (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) and coded. This included a priori codes from the literature (Miles and Huberman 1994), see Figure 21.

Name	Sources	References	Created On
Local Food Brands	71	262	11/09/2015 09:37
Taste	84	258	04/09/2015 10:49
Process	89	252	04/09/2015 11:03
Price	73	235	04/09/2015 11:07
Ingredients	67	207	04/09/2015 11:07
Sight	75	194	04/09/2015 10:50
Emotional attachment	67	194	04/09/2015 11:15
Packaging	62	191	04/09/2015 11:36
Local economy	56	153	04/09/2015 13:41
Health	60	149	07/09/2015 14:24
Provenance	62	146	04/09/2015 14:05
Community	51	136	04/09/2015 11:17
Mainstream, commercial	57	131	12/02/2016 09:26
Memory	46	107	04/09/2015 11:08
Local food	57	107	12/11/2015 11:03
Producer attitude to	43	101	05/02/2016 14:57
Low food miles	43	98	07/09/2015 14:51
Local Appeal	54	96	04/09/2015 10:39
Psychological	41	93	11/02/2016 09:58
Texture	45	90	04/09/2015 10:50
Uncommercial	47	89	04/09/2015 11:49
References to quality	40	89	25/02/2016 10:51
Functional Attributes	49	85	11/09/2015 10:11
Locally grown	39	84	10/02/2016 15:28
Gifts	34	82	04/09/2015 11:45
Information	41	81	07/09/2015 10:18

Figure 21: Open Code Phase

These codes have clear labels and definitions within their node properties to serve as rules for inclusion (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994) and can be used as units of meaning, see Figure 22. Data collected relevant to each code was collected.



*Figure 22: Node Properties*

**Phase 3** – This involved the **re-categorisation of codes** from phase one open coding into what NVivo 10 describes as Phase Two Analysis as shown in Figure 23. Themes broadly relating to Hirschman’s (1980; 1998) layers of meaning were created with the addition of ‘process’, albeit this proved not to be helpful later. Some distilling, re-labelling and merging of categories took place and the labels and rules for inclusion were reviewed to ensure accurately reflect coded content. This made further sense to the data and improved the understanding of the categories properties and the relationship between categories.

The screenshot shows the NVivo interface with the 'Phase Two Analysis' table. The table has four columns: Name, Sources, References, and Created On. The data is as follows:

Name	Sources	References	Created On
Re-ordering, re-labelling, distilling, merging and imposing a hierarchy	0	0	25/02/2016 11:18
Theme 1 - Sensory	0	0	25/02/2016 11:19
Taste	82	248	12/05/2016 11:18
Sight	74	192	25/02/2016 15:04
Texture	45	90	25/02/2016 15:07
Multi-sensory	30	49	25/02/2016 15:07
Smell	26	47	25/02/2016 15:07
Efferent	32	44	11/05/2016 10:38
Experiential	26	39	11/05/2016 10:45
Touch	20	29	25/02/2016 15:07
Direct Sensory	20	27	25/02/2016 15:07
Size	16	22	12/05/2016 12:15
Shape	11	14	25/02/2016 15:07
Afferent	6	8	12/05/2016 11:42
Sound	1	4	25/02/2016 15:07
Theme 2 - Functional	0	0	25/02/2016 12:05
Theme 3 Process	0	0	25/02/2016 15:44
Theme 4 Emotional	0	0	25/02/2016 15:49
Theme 5 Sub - culture	0	0	25/02/2016 15:57
Theme 6 Culture	0	0	25/02/2016 16:00

Figure 23: Re-categorisation of Data

**Phase 4** – This phase encompassed **Data Reduction** and further consolidated and refined the data, for example removing the ‘process’ layer as it overlapped in other themes. The codes were checked to ensure they related to themes generated. The continual coding and refining of the data, identifying its properties, comparing specific incidents and exploring their relationships to one another, helped to develop concepts and aimed for a coherent approach (Taylor and Bogdan 1984) and as such a thematic map or in this instance chart of the analysis emerged (see Figure 24). This was created from:

**RO1: Sensorial analysis** - one theme emerging here was **Taste** which was explored from both afferent (or unisensory) and efferent (or multisensory) perspectives. **Incongruity** (across the senses) was another important theme.

**RO2: Functionality** - themes of **Use Value** and **High Involvement** appeared with a further tertiary theme of **Uncommerciality**. Use value referred to the rational decision making around local food brand purchasing through functional reasons. Respondents appeared to be more highly involved in rationalising their purchases through reasons such as animal welfare. An uncommercial theme, particularly with packaging, emerged.

**RO3: Connections with the tangible and intangible:** a key theme of **doing good and feeling good** was apparent within this objective. Feeling good worked on two levels – a functional one evidenced by Julie noting that both sight and touch enabled her to mentally process a vegetable as fresh. Elena spoke of an emotional connection with her local farmer’s cheese which was doing good for the community creating a feel-good factor for her.

**RO4: Hierarchy:** Two themes emerged - firstly that of a **Hierarchy** initiated by doing good leading to feeling good. Another theme was that of a **Pattern** which indicated a flatter structure. Doing good and feeling good notions were still apparent but respondents took a more meandering or lateral approach to their narratives weaving in both tangible attributes and intangible associations

Objective			
RO1: Sensorial	Taste Afferent/ Efferent	Incongruity	
RO2: Functional	Use-value	High Involvement	Uncommerciality
RO3: Tangible and Intangible Connections	Doing and Feeling Good		
RO4: Hierarchy	Hierarchy	Pattern	

*Figure 24: Thematic chart showing themes in relation to objectives*

**Phase 5** – To further support these themes, **analytical memos were written** in some detail for each layer. The use of memos was two-fold, at an earlier first stage they assisted with the distilling, merging and re-categorisation of codes. For example, psychological (intangible connections) related memos are shown in Figure 25.

Name	Nodes	References
Psychological Engagement	22	24
Psychological gifts	69	124
Psychological liking or regard or affiliation or respect	12	12
Psychological memory	88	225
Psychological nostalgia	67	103
Psychological perception of brands	131	374
Psychological Self Concept	79	107
Psychological well-being	43	69
Psychological animal welfare	64	109

Figure 25: Psychological layer and related memos: first stage.

At a second stage, they were particularly helpful with developing the themes. As such empirical findings against such categories were proposed. Analytical memos were the foundation for each research objective's findings and discussion, and they included:

1. Content relating to the appropriate codes and memos.
2. Any relevant patterns including what may be exceptional cases as well as shared experiences.
3. The codes and memos reflected the layers of meaning albeit broader themes spanning the layers such as doing and feeling good were apparent across all layers. This shows how the codes relate to one another with inferences being drawn and described, such as how the layers might connect with one another. The layers of meaning analysed related directly to dealing with the research objectives. Drafts for each research objective were created from the clusters of codes and first stage memos. A structured narrative was written forming the basis for a coherent and cohesive chapter.
4. Background information recorded against participants was considered and patterns discussed relating to participants' profiles albeit great care was taken here given the qualitative nature of the data.
5. The findings were considered in the context of the literature as well as identifying gaps in the literature, noting the limitations of the study.

These second stage analytical memos were helpful in scoping and creating initial findings (see Figure 26).

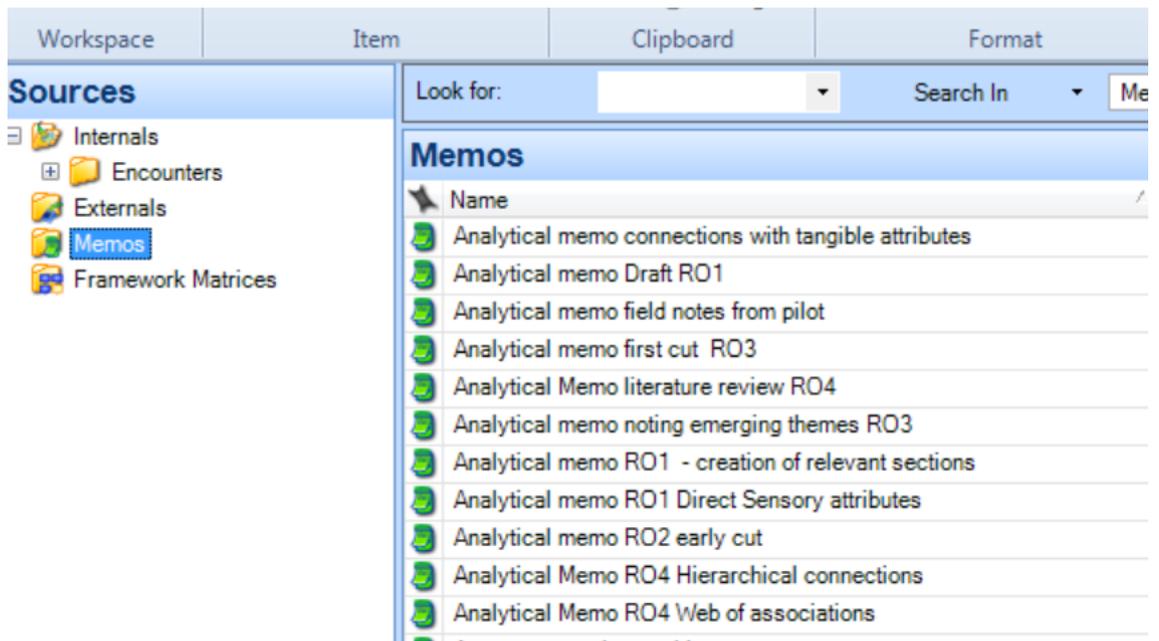


Figure 26: Analytical memos second stage.

**Phase 6** –The first and second stage analytical memos were reviewed and validated through a self-audit by revisiting the data. Evidence beyond individual textual quotes, particularly with reference to the observational data was explored largely to support the stated findings but occasionally to expand on any deeper meanings and themes embedded in the data. The process involved an interrogation of data and considered elements beyond the category itself and which theme was best served within each research objective. For example, threads of the doing and feeling good theme emerged within the first research objective but were better discussed more holistically within the third objective. This drew upon relationships across categories, observations and literature. This phase resulted in evidence-based findings as each finding was validated by being rooted in the data itself together with the discussion using the units of analysis. The following section on Trustworthiness and Authenticity gives further insight as to the integrity and quality of the data and its analysis.

**Phase 7** – After validating the data, the final phase of this analytical process was to create the findings and discussion chapter. The framework devised by Miles and Huberman (1994) corroborated by Braun and Clarke (2006), together with the application of the Nvivo 10 software, allowed for a thorough and considered approach. The data was collated and structured systematically. A number of key themes have been identified in

relation to the research aim and objectives. These will be discussed in detail in the Findings and Discussion chapter.

### **3.8 Assessment of the quality of the empirical research**

The research quality is assessed through the criteria of authenticity and trustworthiness (Lincoln and Guba 1985; Guba and Lincoln 1994). These are the preferred criteria for demonstrating integrity and quality in qualitative research and guided by the interpretive paradigm (Bryman 2004; Daymon and Holloway 2011). This research acknowledged these concepts of trustworthiness and authenticity within its conduct and aimed to improve rigour by overcoming some of the limitations and criticisms of qualitative research. Overall authenticity and trustworthiness are demonstrated by careful documentation of the research process; however, each notion is now discussed more fully.

#### **3.8.1 Authenticity**

A research project is authentic when it is ‘true’, fair and helps others understand their world (Daymon and Holloway 2011, p.93). The strategies used should reflect a ‘*true*’ account of the respondent’s ideas; it should be fair, in other words free from bias and dishonesty; it should help respondents and similar communities comprehend and improve their world. To take each of these in turn, this study aimed to reflect a ‘*true*’ or accurate reporting of respondents’ ideas that aligned with steps taken to ensure credibility (see section 3.8.3 Credibility). The idea of ‘fairness’ (Daymon and Holloway 2011; Bryman 2004) has been embraced as different respondent viewpoints have been demonstrated within the findings with comparisons made, accurately reporting their local food brand purchasing behaviour. Arguably fairness is also addressed by fair or proper treatment of participants through clear explanation of their rights and the research process. Participant information guide and participant consent forms were used for every respondent interaction (see Appendices 14 and 15). Finally, this research aids participants’ and similar groups’ understanding of their world, and this can be considered as ontological authenticity (Guba and Lincoln 1994). Impact approaches have been developed such as sharing this research with Bournemouth University’s Festival of Learning annual event.

### **3.8.2 Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness encompasses the four concepts of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Daymon and Holloway 2011) which provide an alternative to the concepts of reliability and validity. Guba and Lincoln (1994) are uneasy with these latter concepts within qualitative research as they reflect Realism philosophy; there is only one absolute account of social reality and it is the job of the social scientist to reveal this absolute truth. Guba and Lincoln (1994) argue that there may be more than one interpretation of this absolute truth and this is relevant for this research.

### **3.8.3 Credibility**

Credibility replaces the concept of internal validity as used for quantitative studies, as advised by Lincoln and Guba (1985). This entails ensuring that the research adheres to good practice and checking the recorded accounts with respondents to ensure that their social world has been understood correctly (Bryman 2004). The study is credible if respondents recognise that the findings are truthful in their own social context (Daymon and Holloway 2011). To help ensure that the research is likely to be accurate and in accordance with good practice, member checking, or respondent validation took place (see two examples of member checked scripts in Appendix 13). Member checking involves checking that the interpretation of the situations, phenomena and events tallies with the understanding of the respondents (O'Leary 2014). In addition, throughout the interview, measures of credibility were incorporated by regularly checking with respondents to ensure their responses had been interpreted correctly throughout the conversations. For example, Phyllis' (55-65 years) story about a locally sourced meal and its ingredients was verified with her to check the key points. On the one occasion when the voice recorder failed, the record was member checked immediately after notes were taken and this involved asking the participant Flora (45-54 years) to concur with and confirm the transcripts, to ensure that the understanding of her social world was accurate (Roller and Lavrakas 2015). Member checking was advantageous in that it provided assurances from the respondents that the transcripts were accurate and a true and accurate reporting of respondents' ideas, thus also assisting with authenticity.

### **3.8.4 Transferability**

Transferability approximates with the idea of theory-based generalisability and replaces the concept of external validity (Daymon and Holloway 2011). Linked to external validity is generalisability which means that findings can be generalised to other situations. The findings from this relatively small-scale study cannot be generalised. Given this was an intensive study involving a relatively low number of participants, the sample size and limited application to just local food brands diminished this research aspect. However, the thick descriptions (Gertz 1973) that are the rich accounts of the local food brand attributes and associations, helped provide a narrative that others can use to make their own informed judgments about how these research findings may connect with their experiences. The research design, using quasi-ethnographic method and analysis, is transferable to other studies and has been outlined in a manner so that others may benefit from following this approach. In addition, the conceptual framework, adapted from Hirschman, is a sound theoretical framework that could be transferred to another brand meaning research setting (Daymon and Holloway 2011) which may be advantageous for other researchers.

### **3.8.5 Dependability**

Dependability addresses consistency and replaces the notion of reliability (Denscombe 2008; Daymon and Holloway 2011). If the research is to be dependable, this means that another researcher can evaluate the chosen procedures and decision making (Denscombe 2008). A dependable study means that the findings are accurate and consistent (Daymon and Holloway 2011). Miles and Huberman (1994) discuss replicating a finding to help with dependability suggesting that if other researchers choose to follow this research approach to enable them to come up with the same finding, so much the better. Hence an audit trail was established (ibid; Bryman 2004), so that the process can be tracked. This included the formulation of the research issue, sample selection procedure, availability of interview transcripts and fieldwork notes and the transparency of the analysis procedure, all of which are available and have been documented in this study. The NVivo 10 software and analysis was beneficial and aided transparency and supplemented this audit trail, helping with dependability and trustworthiness.

### **3.8.6 Confirmability**

Confirmability deals with researcher bias through both obtaining and analysing data (Given 2008). This is a more appropriate approach rather than objectivity (Daymon and Holloway 2011). Whilst complete objectivity was impossible within this interpretivist approach, the researcher has tried to demonstrate that she has acted in good faith, recognising that her 'self' cannot be removed from the analytical process (Denscombe 2008, p.300). A reflexive statement (see Appendix Ten) helped to achieve this, where personal values and theoretical inclinations have been discussed and reflected upon. The researcher was conscious to ensure that she was not leading the participant in any way and if there was any evidence of bias, the respondent's answer was not included in the analysis. Due to the nature of the research question there was also a risk of social desirability bias, by which participants provide certain responses they believe are expected by society (Kaushal 2014) and possibly the researcher. Flora for example, mentioned that it was inappropriate to eat strawberries when out of season with the inference that they would be imported, impacting negatively on food miles. However, she later let it slip that the family has these at Christmas with chocolate roulade.

For this study to be confirmable, it was demonstrated that the data was clearly linked to sources (Daymon and Holloway 2011). Given (2008) recommends using a coding system to confirm or expand upon current academic knowledge in correlation with the research aim. This has already been explained and NVivo 10 was useful. The units of analysis also clearly linked data to theoretical sources. The findings and conclusions were a result of the research aiming to meet the objectives, and were not based on prior assumptions or preconceptions, and therefore have confirmability.

### **3.9 Research Ethics**

This study was carried out in line with the Research Ethics Code of Practice of Bournemouth University, with a Research Ethics Checklist submitted (see Appendix 14). As some of the research was taking place in farm shops it was also important to address the ethical rights of both the farm shop owner and staff. A preliminary meeting was therefore held with the owner or manager, detailing the purpose of the research and gaining the relevant permissions.

It is important to consider the ethical impact on participants which can include harm to participants, a lack of informed consent, privacy invasion of being deceitful (Bryman and Bell 2011). The research accorded with standards of good practice including the concepts of ‘non-maleficence’ (do no harm) and ‘beneficence’ (do positive good). The research process ensured integrity, quality, and value.

All participants were informed about the research purpose, methods, and intended use. A participant information guide (Appendix 15) and participant consent form (Appendix 16) were devised. Signed consent forms were required from all participants before the research took place, confirming they have read and understood the participant information guide. These documents were designed to be participant-friendly and introduced in context in an informative but casual manner. These are important considerations as these early steps within the research design are key to ensuring if participants want to proceed. The nature of the sample was considered when designing these documents (Mauthner 2002).

Participants were aware that the interviews were audio recorded for later transcription and were assured on their anonymity. It was a non-sensitive topic, and participants could withdraw from the study up to the point of transcription of the data. Each respondent was given a pseudonym for anonymity at the point of transcription and this assisted with the anonymisation of results. Respondents’ privacy was not invaded, and participant supplied information was respected and respondents participated voluntarily, with no coercion. In line with University policy, all audio recordings were deleted immediately after transcription and all transcriptions are held securely in a secure password protected folder for 5 years from the date of the viva voce examination.

## **Chapter Four: Findings and Discussion**

### **4.0 Overview**

This chapter reveals the findings from the rich data collected and discusses the themes that emerge, producing insights into the tangibility of brand meaning. It is arranged by dealing with each objective; firstly, the contribution of the direct sensory attributes is explored followed by the contribution of the functional attributes. The third objective explores the connections between the tangible attributes and the intangible associations, and the final objective gains an understanding of how the tangible attributes contribute towards any hierarchy of meaning. However, before this commences, the chapter establishes the characteristics of the respondents, noting their habitus and the environments in which the encounters took place, linking back to the research methods employed as discussed within the previous chapter.

This chapter reveals how the data brings the tangibility of brand meaning to life. It discusses the findings in the context of the real lives and their lived experiences of the respondents which included 24 households. These respondents were encountered within a variety of locations ranging from farm shops across the county including, Felicity's Farm Shop, Washingpool Farm Shop, Food Fairs in the towns and villages of Wimborne and Leigh, respondents' kitchens, respondents' homes and cafes including those that served local food and those that did not. The chapter commences by offering some insight into three of the most articulate respondents, who have strong connections with local food and local food brands. These come from extracts of field notes from interactions with Hilary, Phyllis and Jilly.

#### **4.0.1 Respondent Insights**

##### **4.0.1.1 Hilary (45-54 years) (Kitchen Visit/Accompanied Shopping trip)**

Hilary is in her 50s and lives in Poole having moved from London a few years ago. She is well educated with a sociology degree. She used to work in social care and now travels frequently across the county with her work. This involves helping people, particularly those with troubled backgrounds, showing them how to cook and how to grow vegetables.

She has a very good understanding of food and local social issues. She is a single mother with 17-year-old daughter Lily. She makes big efforts to manage her money by exerting huge control over her buying behaviour particularly exemplified at Wimborne Food Fair. This allows her to buy local food when she can. However, she is generous and frequently talked about gift buying. She makes no secret that she had to be careful with money, although she views herself as middle class. She is an excellent cook and uses locally grown produce to make delicious meals. She has limited access to farm shops.

We met initially at her terraced house in Heckford Park in Poole and it was an inviting characterful property seemingly fitting with our local food enthusiast and reflecting her personality. Hilary is a vibrant active person, hugely enthusiastic about local food and was at pains to tell me about this passion. Her profession centres on educating people about food; however, this is a backdrop to the real mission which is helping and supporting people who have been through some sort of crisis.

I entered the kitchen, which is small, but horseshoe shaped where everything is easily accessible. It was the kitchen of a cook. There were well-used pans and gadgets and Hilary moved easily across the space instinctively reaching for items as she spoke. This was a woman used to this space and preparing food. She was preparing a Spanish omelette and as we spoke the smells started to emerge and become increasingly appetising. I was a little disappointed that I was not invited to stay to taste the final dish. [This continues in Appendix Six].

#### **4.0.1.2 Phyllis (55-64 years) (Accompanied Farm Shops' Visits)**

Phyllis lives in rural Dorset and adores the lifestyle, with many friends and contacts in the village where she has lived for many years. She is married and has a 16-year old son. Phyllis left school with A levels and engaged with later adult education gaining a law qualification. She runs an engineering company. Together with her husband, she enjoys cooking from scratch and eschews processed food given her husband's health condition. She is a devoted shopper and has a positive attitude and curiosity towards local food brands. She frequents her local butcher situated opposite her house.

Phyllis and I visited two farm shops together, Washingpool Farm Shop in Bridport, west Dorset and Felicity's Farm Shop a few miles south. These were engaging sessions and rapport was easily established. Phyllis seemed genuinely immersed in the experience and

seemed very interested with the setting, the experience and the brands on offer. There was a detailed examination of the brands, particularly the packaging some of which were new to her and an hour passed easily within Washingpool Farm Shop, which was impressive given its relative size to other grocers but demonstrating just how absorbed Phyllis was with the experience.

We moved on to Felicity's. Felicity and her son were there, and we immediately started talking building upon the previous times that I had visited. Phyllis enjoyed these exchanges and joined in. Indeed, whilst I was talking to Felicity's sister, I returned to find both Felicity and Phyllis in deep conversation about their respective dogs and the benefits of cooking mutton. As we left the premises, Phyllis commented upon how much she had enjoyed that interaction and both farm shop visits. Of note is that she had appeared to particularly have enjoyed the second visit at Felicity's because of the social interaction with the owner.

#### **4.0.1.3 Jilly (45-54 years) (Interview at the Salt Pig café)**

Jilly is married, in her 50s and lives near Weymouth. Whilst she has no children, she has a very good knowledge of local food brands and describes herself as middle class, **but** this is a different interpretation to how Hilary views this. Whilst we did not specifically discuss her education, from the discussion I gleaned that this is a well-educated woman who travels frequently and speaks French fluently. She invited me to follow her on Twitter and she is prolific with her contributions with a few thousand followers. She takes a lively interest in local politics, national politics, particularly Brexit being a staunch Remainer, and is a huge foodie, regularly posting pictures of her meals. Jilly says she is lucky with her disposable income and acutely aware that there are others less fortunate for whom buying local food is simply not on the radar. She was a councillor, has run the Citizens Advice Bureau in Weymouth and is a Labour Party activist, albeit not a Corbyn supporter.

I met Jilly at the Salt Pig Café in Wareham and was enthusiastically greeted. Over a locally food-based lunch, Jilly came across as highly educated with a real in-depth knowledge of local foods and local food brands. She clearly wanted to chat and viewed this almost like a semi-social occasion, busying herself with ordering her lunch and getting stuck into a glass of wine. Her subsequent conversation was informed, with an

impressive knowledge of local food brands, happily filling in gaps in my knowledge as and when they appeared. The conversation was stimulating with a couple of hours passing without us realising.

Throughout all these interactions, I was able to achieve a balance of informality to help put respondents at their ease, together with ensuring that I was introducing and covering all the themes that were important to discuss. Appendix Six gives details of all the respondents.

This chapter now continues with the findings and subsequent discussion of the first research objective (RO1).

#### **4.1. Research Objective One (RO1): To explore the contribution of the direct sensory attributes to brand meaning of local food brands.**

This is the first of two objectives that deal with tangibility. This objective deals with the sensorial attributes with the following objective exploring the functional attributes. Two themes emerged from the analysis of the data; firstly the ‘**direct sensory**’ element, as originally espoused by Hirschman (1980; 1998) as importance was attached to the singular sense of taste, but this included the use of cross-modular descriptions apparent when describing taste. Secondly a theme of ‘**sensory congruity**’ is explored. This section takes these themes in turn, firstly summarising the key points from the relevant literature regarding the current understanding concerning adopting a direct sensory position. Then the research findings are revealed, with appropriate units of analysis emboldened where helpful within respondents’ quotations. Finally, a discussion takes place focusing on how the findings either support previous literature or diverge. This is repeated for the ‘sensory congruity’ theme.

##### **4.1.1 Direct Sensory**

As discussed in Chapter Two, Section Two, Hirschman (1980) asserts that tangibility can be detected through one of the five senses and specifically refers to the term ‘direct sensory’ as the first layer in her layers of meaning later in 1998. Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) refer to ‘afferent’ and ‘efferent’, with afferent being paralleled with a direct sensory experience such as a product taste test. One sense receiving much attention from

respondents involved in this study is taste, creating a straightforward meaning for consumers and there are five pure tastes - sweet, salty, sour, bitter and umami (Krishna 2012). However, several senses can be used to evaluate tasting experiences through a combination of smell, texture, visual appeal and sound (e.g. crunch), supporting the five, separate cellular and biochemical reactions to taste (ibid 2012). Cross-modular sensory assessments demonstrate that more than one sense can impact upon taste evaluations (e.g. Becker et al. 2011; De Liz Pocztaruk et al. 2011) and research methods have tended to be quantitative in approach (Stach 2015).

Evident from the thematic analysis was consumers' engagement with taste as a tangible attribute, which was to be expected as they were discussing local food brands. Elena (25-34 years) wants her family to enjoy salads so adds cheese for additional flavour:

*...So mainly I add this cheese that is a bit salty (**pure taste**), but you know kind of zesty at the same time to give it more flavour.*

This is a straight-forward description alluding to one of the five pure tastes, salty. Respondents did not seem influenced or conscious of other senses and associations as exemplified by Carrie (55-64 years) when discussing Felicity's farm shop's fishcakes. She was single minded about taste when referring to Felicity's farm shop's fishcakes in discussion with both her friend Samantha and the interviewer.

*Carrie: "Just particularly these? It's taste – yes, they smell (**sense**) fishy but they, it's the taste they actually taste (**sense**) of fish rather than just synthetic or potato.*

*Interviewer: okay and do they remind you of anything?*

*Carrie: No? [laughs]*

*Samantha: Does it not remind you of Seatown?*

*Carrie: No. ...no... [laughs]*

This single focus or unisensory evaluation was echoed by Jilly (55-64 years) when referring to Chesil Smokery's smoked salmon:

*"Well I think it's such a really nice ingredient that actually I don't want to use it with too much stuff because it stands out on its own (**afferent**). So generally, we just eat it on its own with crackers or something, or with scrambled eggs, or*

*possibly in a salad, but I wouldn't want to cover it in any sauce or anything because it's really nice. I mean you'd wreck it otherwise”.*

She dismisses any other associations such as the appearance of the product and its label:

*“But actually, I wouldn't really care what the label looks (**sense**) like because I really like the fish, so it wouldn't bother me at all”.*

She is supported by Helen (55-64 years) Harold (65+ years) and Julie (55-64 years) when they buy locally branded meat despite being probed for other associations such as smell, memory, etc. This so far supports an afferent, unisensory position, particularly as there is an absence of intangible associations.

This single-minded position became a little less focused when respondents made real efforts to describe the taste. Hilary (45-54 years) gives her perspective to communicate the depth of taste found with Holton Lee vegetables:

*Interviewer: “When you get something from Holton Lee like lettuce and radish how does it taste?”*

*Hilary: earthy, it has got a flavour.*

*Interviewer: How does it compare to the supermarket?*

*Hilary: There is no comparison really, there's no comparison. You know obviously it's better sometimes I meet people who don't like it though, as it tastes of something more. Yeah you know the earthiness (**texture, cross-modal**) I guess is a little more intense. When I get things from the community gardens you know and when we have a harvest and stuff, it's often, if I take it to classes [with people from troubled backgrounds], I sometimes take, some of them like ooough (**emotion**) you know, they think there is something wrong with it because it hasn't got that blandness. Or sometimes it is blander as it hasn't got sort of added sorts of things”.*

Hilary highlights the depth of the earthy flavour by contrasting it with the bland flavour perceived by those who weren't used to eating organically grown vegetables. This begins to challenge the afferent position with the use of the term 'earthiness' and her account of others disliking the intensity of the taste. Later at the Wimborne food fair she attempts to describe the taste of Comins Tea.

*“.....for some reason I can't find the words to...distinctive! Sophisticated! Authentic!... No. I'm still not sure there's enough for me to go 'oh'.*

*I: What does it taste like?*

*H: Powdery (**cross modal**). It doesn't taste powdery- it's not got a powdery texture, but you know there's a taste of powder. It's got that taste. Does that make sense?”*

Describing taste is challenging but respondents become very engaged with the process e.g. Jilly (55-64 years), (Rebecca 35-44 years) and Freda (55-64 years). There were many powerful descriptions and adjectives ranged from “powdery”, “smoky”, “flavoursome”, “saucier” “creamy”, “earthy”, “rich”, “zingy” and “blue”. Spence (2012) assert that we use several senses to evaluate taste and occasionally respondents are borrowing from other senses in a cross modular way to assist with their descriptions e.g. ‘powdery’ ‘creamy’ and ‘earthy’ are textural references.

Phyllis, (55-64 years) when asked to compare a chicken from her local butcher (WS Clarke & Sons) with that from a supermarket gave a more overt reference to texture albeit with little reference to taste.

*“It's juicer (**haptic**), it's not heavy it's not fibrous, it's not - you don't have to chew it for ages. We did have in fact chicken last night from a supermarket with a sauce and my husband said, “this really is quite thick and it's heavy going”. Whereas from the butcher it is juicier and lighter and far more flavoursome”.*

Many respondents agree that local food brands taste superior to, and have more flavour than supermarket or mainstream brands, including Harold (65+ years) in his comparison of a local craft beer brand to Peroni; Carrie (55-64 years) who compares Felicity's Farm Shop's fish cakes favourably to big brand alternatives such as Marks and Spencer, and Eleanor (55-64 years) supports the notion that her local cheese, from her nearby farm shop, has a better taste in comparison to Cathedral City and Pilgrims Cheddar.

The multisensory or hedonic aspect, however, was evident. From the observational field notes taken, it was apparent that consumers enjoyed the farm shop experience. The notes reveal:

*“I could observe four women who really were enjoying the experience ... loved touching and feeling (**haptic sense**) the fruit and vegetables. They were going on*

*holiday to Devon together and they were really excited. It's something they do together every year for the last 20 years and this was part of the experience of what they were doing ... they loved the theatre of the shop. I am talking about the experiential side...they wanted those sensorial aspects and they were very important to them. And I followed them around as they said, "look at that, feel that" (sight, haptic senses).*

In summary, respondents use of adjectives is far more thoughtful and considered than drawing upon the five pure tastes. Occasionally they may draw upon another sense such as texture to assist with their descriptions of their experiences but there are many examples when there is an absence of other senses and any further associations drawn from memory. This would suggest that some branded local food consumption is afferent, directly relating to the sense of taste. The tastes were distinctive and superior to other brands. Nonetheless, respondents borrowed from other senses to describe taste and the multisensory, emotive (e.g. pleasure) elements were present.

#### **4.1.2 Discussion: Afferent or Efferent?**

There are many examples where respondents adopt an afferent approach when considering what local food brands mean to them and this is illustrated by Elena, Carrie and Jilly. This is a single minded, unisensory evaluation which does not draw upon any other senses or associations. The afferent position becomes less focused when respondents introduce cross-modular references from other senses, such as texture, to help them convey what the brand means to them. Taste is still the single most important sense; however, in their efforts to describe how good a local food brand tastes, there is greater sophistication in their use of adjectives (e.g. 'powdery', 'earthy', 'zingy) contrasting with the five basic taste receptors (sweet, salty, sour, bitter and umami). The textural references used to describe taste are of interest and there have been many quantitative cross-modular assessments with scholars noting the importance of more than one sense impacting upon our taste evaluations (e.g. Deroy and Valentin 2011; Spence et al. 2013). Specifically, Krishna and Morrin (2008) Schifferstein (2009) and Piqueras-Fiszman and Spence (2012) examine haptics and packaging noting congruent features but there is an opportunity for further research assessing how texture impacts upon taste evaluations exploring the use of cross-modular descriptions to describe taste.

There are occasions when further associations appear to play little part, exemplified by Jilly, Helen, Harold, Julie, Carrie, and Freda. Respondents are probed if the brand reminds them of anything, any links to memory or previous connections whilst tasting. They dismiss this idea. Whilst Jilly and Flora offer evidence to the contrary as discussed later in Research Objective Three, this research questions if there are always deeper underlying meanings when consuming local food brands as there are many situations when respondents simply enjoy the tasting experience and the connotations here are of “*fairly recent or superficial things*” (Hilary 55-64 years).

There may be other sub-conscious factors at play such as the influence of the Black Cow vodka brand name and its bottle shape. However, with lesser known, less sophisticated brands such as vegetable boxes, meat and cheeses, there are fewer distractions which may explain why respondents focus on taste. Some efferent experiences emerge, nonetheless, in terms of intensity and pleasure (Holbrook and Hirschman 1982) evidenced by Hilary experiencing the taste of Woolsery cheese (see next section on sensory congruity), or conversely by some of her class members finding the taste of Holten Lee vegetables too intense. The pleasure experienced by the four women on holiday looking, feeling and experiencing the brands in Felicity’s Farm shop demonstrated the hedonic, multisensory aspects, fitting with an efferent approach.

Hirschman’s layer of Direct Sensory therefore not only contains the afferent position, but the efferent position should be recognised; both have meaning. Taste is the most important sense articulated by respondents in this category and creates meaning in its own right. However, there is an interesting transition from afferent to efferent in describing taste with cross-modular references assisting to clarify the meaning. Sometimes meanings can be straight-forward, or they can be more elaborate (Slater 1997; Franzen and Bowman 2001).

The other theme of sensory congruity emerged from the data and this is similarly approached to the previous theme. Firstly, there is a brief reminder of the relevant literature, then the research findings are revealed and finally a discussion takes place focusing on how the findings either support previous literature or diverge.

### 4.1.3 Sensory Congruity

As noted in Chapter Two, Section Two, congruity across these senses is seen as desirable (Wansink et al. 2005; Yeomans et al. 2008), with Spence (2012) asserting that this is where attributes from one sense are associated with those from another. Many quantitative research approaches assess and demonstrate congruous associations across the senses (e.g. DuBose et al. 1980; Zampini et al. 2007) recommending avoiding sensory incongruence. However, Starch (2015) notes that consumers accept a moderate level of incongruence as it stimulates their mental processing albeit this is with peripheral cues, but it improves their evaluation of the brand. Mintel (2013) observes that consumers are willing to buy misshapen British fruit and vegetables forgoing perfect-looking specimens, suggesting that the appearance and subsequent taste may not necessarily be congruous. Krishna (2012) calls for further research regarding sensory conflict around brand consumption.

The findings reveal further multisensory reactions demonstrating congruity, and the literature suggests this is desirable. This is evidenced by Steve (55-64 years) using several senses to comment on Fudge's brand of local biscuits:

*"It's got to be the taste. I mean you open the packet and the first thing is the aroma (**sense**) and the second thing is the taste (**sense**) and the texture (**sense** and resulting **congruity**) and then you know you have got something special"*

This is not always the case, however, and there are several incongruent examples emerging from consumers considered and rich descriptions of the taste of local food brands. Rebecca (35-44 years) compares the appearance to the taste.

*"The Black Cow vodka is really rich, and it actually tastes (**sense**) creamy. I know that sounds really bizarre because it's vodka and it's also transparent (**sense**). But it tastes really creamy, it's smooth (**incongruity**). You know the difference between drinking a blended whisky and drinking a 30-year-old single malt, it's kind of like that. It's got a richness to it. Creamy. It's lovely"*

Hilary (45-54 years) is taken by the taste of Woolsery cheese despite its appearance:

*Hilary: "I'll try a bit. Oh my god that's amazing (tasting (**sense**) cheese).*

*Interviewer: We're looking (sense) at a sort of knobbly cheese which is surrounded by mould, (incongruity) but yellows and greens. Amazing sort of protective skin, but the taste is – how would you describe that taste?*

*Hilary: Rich, zingy, but also creamy. Powerful but not Stilton-y. There's a tinge of that blue taste but only a tinge, it's very strong but not in a particularly blue-y way. That would be great to cook with because it's got a lot of power but I dunno if I'd waste it on cooking”.*

Jilly (55-64 years) explores the relationship between Godminster cheese's creamy consistency and taste:

*“I think it's a combination of creamy and flavoursome. Apparently, lots of cheeses that are creamy are very mild, and lots of tastier ones are not so creamy. Somehow they manage to combine both.”*

A creamy texture is associated with a flavoursome taste. Cheddar is often associated with a sharp taste rather than being creamy (Spence 2012) and has a hard texture. Taste continues to be the dominant sense and congruity with other senses does not seem important. Whilst it sounds 'bizarre', the Black Cow Vodka's taste is 'creamy' yet the vodka is 'transparent'. Woolsery cheese has an unattractive appearance yet its taste is 'amazing'. This sensory incongruity is usefully summed up by Jilly (54-65 years) when discussing fruit, vegetables and cheeses:

*“...whereas in French supermarkets you've got big things and these smaller things and slightly damaged things. They don't care about perfection and uniformity; they care about flavour. Whereas we seem to value perfection and uniformity and the way things look over variety and taste. I think that's the wrong way round...they were saying to you “taste it” because they know that's the way you're going to buy it, as opposed to here where they just put some wax on the skin, and that's a completely different way of valuing things. I don't know where we lost taste and variety over visual qualities. .... All this stuff that turns up in French markets, every day, you've got little blokes who are producing their own little cheeses which frankly look pretty unappetising, but oh my god when you taste them, they taste fantastic. We don't seem to be prepared to take that leap”.*

Some of this has been recognised by Mintel (2013) noting that some consumers are willing to buy misshapen fruit and vegetables here in the UK, suggesting some acceptance

of incongruity. Mintel, however, is a relatively lone voice amongst the literature with this view.

To summarise, where respondents recognise the multisensory reactions they experienced, on occasions they appreciate the congruity across those senses. There are, however, several notable occasions where they comment on the incongruity – where sight in particular is not aligned with taste. These are valuable observations about incongruity or misalignment of the senses and voice some concerns about uniformity.

#### **4.1.4 Discussion: Congruity or Incongruity?**

Rebecca, with Black Cow vodka, Hilary, with Woolsery cheese, and Jilly with Godminster cheese and her experiences with French supermarkets, all draw attention to the incongruity in the presentation of the brand. This contrasts with many scholars' findings partly summarised by Stach's (2015) assessment on congruency effects with associated networks, especially as they argue that multisensory compared to unisensory experiences create more intense consumer reactions. Calvert and Pathak (2015) recommend sensory clashes be avoided as our brains are good at categorising a multisensory experience as a single integrated phenomenon and an incongruous multisensory experience decreases consumers' liking for a brand. Yet the findings here show that the taste of the brand is so good it over-rides its unattractive or incongruous appearance. Nevertheless, there were cases when tangible attributes were multisensory and congruent contributing to the perception that the local food brand is superior to other brands, exemplified by Steve, commenting on Fudge's brand of local biscuits.

Many scholars (e.g. Wansink et al. 2005; Yeomans et al. 2008; Spence 2012) support the notion of sensory congruity which arguably creates clearer meaning. Stach (2015) however, recognises consumer can accept a moderate level of incongruence, through more peripheral cues, as this stimulates mental processing and improves their brand evaluation. Here the incongruity is remarkable. Meaning is all about patterns of associations and the pattern may not necessarily be uniform. Creating dis-harmony may cause this pattern to become more distinctive and enriched, so the meaning may be more memorable and deeper. Congruency may not be necessary as it is the patterns of associations that creates meaning and not consistency across that set of associations.

The chapter now continues with the findings and discussion of the second research objective (RO2).

#### **4.2 Research Objective Two (RO2): To understand the contribution of functional attributes to brand meaning of local food brands.**

This is the second of two objectives dealing with tangibility. This objective deals with the functional attributes. There are two themes, derived from the data analysis that are of interest: **the use-value of functional attributes reflecting a more involved decision-making approach** and secondly a more minor theme of the **perception of commercially designed branded packaging**. The first theme is dealt with by a brief reminder of the relevant literature, then revealing the research findings, highlighting appropriate units of analysis, and finally a discussion takes place focusing on how the findings either support previous literature or diverge. The second theme is dealt with in a similar manner to the first.

##### **4.2.1 Use-Value and Involvement**

As discussed in Chapter Two, Section Three, functional attributes can include price, support for the local economy and labelling. Consumers are prepared to pay a premium for local food (Feldmann and Hamm 2015) albeit Mintel (2015) adds that it is those with greater household incomes are more likely to pay extra. Lower prices would encourage consumers to buy more locally produced items and they perceive that currently they represent poor value for money. Nonetheless buyer motivations include supporting the local economy and community (Zepeda and Leviten-Reid 2004; Dukeshire et al. 2011). Mintel (2015) reports a need for clearer labelling generally with consumers being sceptical about on-pack information including product origin; consumers search for information (Feldman and Hamm 2015; Zepeda and Deal 2009) scrutinising labels; this activity forms stronger attitudes, and therefore higher involvement stemming from more considered thought.

Batey (2016) asserts that grocery brands are chosen with little deliberation, and on habit and experience. Snack foods and soft drinks are perceived as low involvement products as easily affordable brand purchases require less involvement and little information

search. Rosenbaum-Elliott et al. (2011) whilst having some qualms about rational models of consumer choice, recognise products can be utilitarian and can be assessed by objective criteria such as price per gramme. Hirschman (1990) shows how functional products such as glasses can be valued for their use-value (Marx 1930) as they improve vision, thus describing the utilitarian value of a product's functional performance. Bardhi et al. (2012) found that respondents spend time searching for information around functional products such as high energy bars and safari suits as they are highly involved with use-values such as health, flexibility and durability.

The main findings for use-value and involvement are presented in the following manner: first are functional attributes linking to the senses, and then findings on price and affordability are given. Further functional attributes demonstrating use-value include supporting farmers, animal welfare ingredients and health concerns are then presented. The use of labels conveying information is given. An indication regarding respondents' involvement with local food brands is shown by findings relating to planning and preparation of meals. The demonstration of these functional attributes supports that consumers consider the use-value of local food brands and this reflects a more involved decision-making approach.

#### **4.2.2 Connection with the senses**

Elena (25-34 years) finds that adding locally sourced branded cheese as an ingredient to a salad enhances the taste and this has an important function of making the family eat vegetables:

*“It adds taste (**sense**). It depends some cheeses are more zesty others are more sweet, some are more salty, some are softer, some are harder. It depends what kind of dish I'm making, if it's like an Italian dish or if it's more of a summer salad I want light taste. So, it depends on what I am doing (**use value**) that will influence what kind of cheeses I buy...”*

This underpins Hultén (2011) and Hirschman (1990) connecting the senses with functionality, and the role of the senses has been discussed at some length in the previous section.

### 4.2.3 Pricing and Affordability

Richard and Judy (65+ years and 55-64 years respectively) support Felicity's Farm shop but are conscious of money and only spend a small proportion of their grocery budget there. Judy said:

*“and I haven't got much money (**affordable**), but I choose to buy something, we sit down, appreciate it and have maybe a little bit less”.*

This notion of having less but appreciating what you have is echoed by Rebecca (35-44 years) who says:

*“We probably eat less meat per meal to **afford** the more expensive meat... So, we tend to eat more vegetables to go with it.”*

Flora (45-54 years), Jilly (55-64 years) and Phyllis (55-64 years) with higher household incomes are willing to pay extra on local food brands aligning with Mintel's (2015) findings but, for others, this is a more considered purchase as they are mindful of costs, and this affects their consumption.

Observations from Ferndene Farm shop generated data that revealed a commercial set up that was very competitively priced in comparison to other farm shops visited. The shop stocked predominantly Ferndene Farm shop's own brand with affordable pricing. The older profile of consumer was noted with overhearing a direct quote: *“look at this, wonderful, and the prices, it's so cheap”*. This supports further findings from Mintel (2015) that lower prices would encourage consumers to buy more locally-produced items. Ferndene appears to be busy and very successful, with no evidence of advertising. It engenders loyalty from Julie (55-64 years) who speaks highly of the farm shop, and she commented on their competitive pricing and value for money from this local food brand.

### 4.2.4 Supporting Farmers and Animal Welfare

Rebecca (35-44 years) and Andrew (65+ years) and wife Mary (55-64 years) Beryl (55-64 years) want to support British growers and farmers which Mintel (2013) sees as an emotive issue. Rebecca's explanation is more rational:

*“Part of it is about **supporting local farmers** and I value the local aspect and I value their contribution to that. You know I walk the dog a lot in Dorset and I like*

*the landscape being the way it is - it is only going to continue to be like that if it has small producers on it and the small producers are only going to continue to farm it if they can get a decent price for their product. So, there is that economic aspect of it.”*

Beryl (55-64 years) has strong feelings about the supermarkets:

*“I just get so annoyed about the supermarket business which has been on the news recently. Of the farmers, not being paid the price that it costs them to produce the milk (**supporting local farmers**) and as a consumer that - I know we’re as guilty as everybody else in that we do go to the supermarkets and do a fairly large shop”*

Andrew (65+ years) justifies his local food brand consumption as supporting the local economy and community aligning with the findings of Mintel (2015), Dukeshire et al. (2011), Bianchi and Mortimer (2015) and Pearson et al. (2013). He reasons:

*Andrew: “I guess if it’s made or grown locally, then it has a double whammy of: it’s sold locally and grown locally*

*Interviewer: So, tell me why local is important to you.*

*Andrew: Well because they are people trying to make a living, aren’t they?”*

He is pragmatic regarding animal welfare:

*“It is very important [to buy locally branded meat]. I think in educating people they have got to understand how the animals are treated (**animal welfare**) on the farm. I mean, if you look at anywhere farmers do not look after the livestock, the animals don’t look good. You know, the animals are stressed (**animal welfare**) and therefore the meat will tighten up and you will not get the good flavours. When they are looked after and fed properly and nurtured from being a calf to an adult it is fantastic and that’s why the quality of the meat is so good.”*

Hilary (45-54 years), is more emotive saying “*I think I would rather eat a road-kill rabbit than a battery egg*” and Rebecca (35-44 years) is critical of others’ purchasing behaviour:

*“It’s like a box of 24 or maybe 36 eggs. It says very clearly on the front ‘caged’ hens which is just abhorrent (**emotive**), and I don’t know why they are selling them in my humble opinion. So, when I pick up my free-range organic eggs, I feel a*

*little bit self-righteous about the fact that I've made that choice and if I see somebody pushing a trolley with those caged eggs in, I do judge them”.*

Provenance is conveyed by local food brands' packaging and labels. Rebecca (35-44 years) and Hilary (45-54 years) engage with scrutinising labels. Rebecca says that her daughter complains about this activity:

*“... she hates shopping at a supermarket with me as I'm constantly reading labels (**use-value**) and she gets really cross”.*

Hilary is interested in the ingredients from a health perspective:

*“I bought Dorset Cereal. But because she wanted something without fruit, I read every single one. Because she wanted **healthy** but without fruit. But they all had sugar in, and salt. Everything. Even the ones with the eco- looking recyclable you know, so I just don't trust them.”*

This supports Mintel (2013:2015) who states that consumers can be sceptical about on-pack information. No respondents queried any specific accreditation labelling (Mintel 2013) which was surprising given the amount of effort made within the vicinity of Dorset from accreditation bodies. Respondents want labels to be informative and useful. Whilst Hilary, Eleanor (55-64 years) and Flora (45-54 years) get helpful information regarding no additives or preservatives, Phyllis (55-65 years) relies on her butcher, rather than a label, regarding her meat's provenance, which is essential for her husband's health:

*“Buying the meat from the butcher over the road; one interesting thing with my husband's condition is the difference between grain fed animals and grass-fed animals. The butcher can tell us (**information**) because he knows the farms. It might say organic (**label**) on a packet from the supermarket but that's such a wide field that you don't know what they have been fed on”.*

#### **4.2.5 Considered Planning and Preparation:**

Locally branded vegetable boxes instigate careful planning and preparation but also curiosity and creativity as evidenced by Hilary and Jilly (55-64). Jilly talks about her Gold Hill Organics box, aware that its contents vary depending upon seasonality:

*“I just quite like the fact that my veg box turns up every week and I never know what's going to be in it. And I have to think about ‘gosh what am I going to do with these things, and how am I going to plan (**rational decision making**) my menu about it, and not go shopping until the day after the veg boxes has come so that I can plan (**rational decision making**) around that and occasionally go “what on earth is this thing?” and have a quick look at the website (**information**) to find out what it is because I don't know. It hasn't happened very often, but it does happen sometimes. She sent me some turmeric root once she'd been experimenting with and I did have to have a look it and go ‘what exactly is that?’”*

Similarly, Jennifer (25-34 years) used locally produced garlic sausages as an ingredient for a meatball recipe.

*“They made some awesome meatballs and we bought loads and squeezed it out... and that was really nice and the quality of the meat inside it there wasn't a lot of fat that came off of it. It was you know really tasty and there were lots of thick bits of meat in there that you could physically see”.*

In summary, sensorial attributes such as improving the taste with cheese can help with making a salad more appetising. Findings on price and affordability are given with some differences observed between different income groups. Supporting local farmers are linked to economic justifications whilst animal welfare concerns are underpinned by both functional and emotional reasons. Labels are scrutinised but vary in usefulness, with no reference being made to any accreditation labelling. Awareness of any accreditation was low. Respondents' involvement is high with planning and preparing meals and they are creative with their use of ingredients using local food brands.

#### **4.2.6 Discussion: Low or High Involvement?**

The major theme occurring from these findings on functionality is the use-value of functional attributes reflecting a more involved decision-making approach. Whilst the financial outlay is higher on occasion than grocery, this local food brand category may arguably be perceived as low involvement (Rosenbaum-Elliott et al. 2011; Batey 2016) however respondents here are highly involved. For example, Judy considers the costs but suggests that it is better to consume less but appreciate what you have; similarly Rebecca deliberately chooses to eat less meat and more vegetables. Ferndene Farm shop's lower

prices adopt a more functional approach appealing to a broad range of incomes. Flora, Jilly and Phyllis (55-64 years) with higher household incomes are willing to pay extra on local food brands aligning with DEFRA (2008) and Mintel's (2015) findings. Others such as Richard and Judy, Hilary, Julie and Rebecca, are more considered with their local food brand purchases and cost is clearly an influencing factor upon their consumption.

Local food brand consumption supports British growers and farmers, evidenced by Beryl and Andrew. Farmers provide a further benefit in preserving the landscape espoused by Rebecca, Beryl and Mary. Additional benefits ensue such as respecting animal welfare, as Andrew rationally explains that the meat tightens up if the animals become stressed, resulting in flavour loss. Emotion can surface, however, evidenced by Hilary who would rather consume a road-kill rabbit than an egg from a battery caged chicken and Rebecca thinks it is *'abhorrent'* to eat eggs from caged hens. Rebecca and Hilary both scrutinise labels, but they vary in their usefulness. Whilst they can give important information regarding health, Phyllis is more reliant on her butcher for information and learning about her meat's provenance. Finally, Hilary and Jilly plan their vegetable consumption carefully considering what comes from the delivered vegetable box depending on the seasonality. Occasionally Jilly will seek further information to help her determine how best to use a vegetable.

These examples of highly considered and rational decision making do not chime with the assertions of Rosenbaum-Elliott et al. (2011). Whilst they assert that *"no product is low involvement for every person at all times"* (p.11), local food brands defy the assumed low involvement positioning as the respondents exhibit highly involved characteristics such as planning their expenditure; deliberate choice of supporting local producers; choice of meat with good animal welfare credentials; high information search to understand the ingredients and the meticulous planning of meals. They draw upon the use-value of the locally branded foods to assist them with their decision making and this is not minimal search as suggested by Rosenbaum- Elliott et al. (2011). This is not choice with little deliberation as espoused by Batey (2016) for grocery packaged goods. Respondents are consciously making considered decisions involving both rational and emotional engagement and there does not appear to be much evidence of sub-conscious decision-making taking place with little cognitive processing as asserted by Heath (2000). The motivations here are more than straight-forward utilitarian basic needs and the desire to use the vegetable boxes and the sausages as a means for ingredients for other meals

suggests considered thinking which is more than basic problem solving and is far more creative.

Respondents engage with the functional attributes of locally branded foods including price, supporting farmers, animal welfare, labelling, ingredients and health. Their resulting use-value chimes with Grobel (2013) who asserts there is an increasing consumer preoccupation with local sourcing, food miles, ethics and a focus on health. Grobel expresses this as a return to the roots of branding. These are important attributes, contributing to the brands' performance, essential for consumer engagement and central to the brands' meaning (Keller 2012).

There is a further minor theme emerging from the data concerning the perception of commercially designed packaging, which is now discussed.

#### **4.2.7 Packaging Perception**

A reminder of the literature reveals that consumers may make choices between different brands based on packaging, pricing and taste preferences (Rosenbaum-Elliott et al. 2011). Spence and Gallace (2011) comment that a combination of vision and touch facilitate a consumer's likelihood to purchase and brands that have an appropriate tactile feel are more likely to be handled and purchased. This is exemplified by Dorset Cereal's packaging; printing on the rough side of the cardboard to achieve a more appropriate textured feel, reflecting the nature of the cereal product. Appendix 12 gives further packaging examples of local food brands.

The findings show that there are positive comments about brand names and packaging. Flora (45-54 years) is a "sucker for good packaging" and cites Liberty Fields' bottles:

*"the delicacy of their bottles...quietly sophisticated...every inch of that brand is clever. The touch (**haptic**), labels and choice of bottles...it's beyond clever"*.

She likes the Mannabonbons' chocolate packaging that comes in a distinctive brown sleeve packaging that is highly tactile and offers a good opening experience supporting the comments of Spence and Gallace (2011). Phyllis (55-64 years) comments on the Wobbly Cottage brand and its presentation:

*"Well first of all that is a fabulous name. That would draw me to it as it is something a little bit different. I'm easily swayed by packaging. Anything that*

*looks a little bit quirky or different. I love Bunny's Love carrot marmalade. I think having that in the cupboard would just make me smile (**emotion**) every time I pick it out - Bunny's Love spicy runner bean pickle. Bunny's Love local ale and honey mustard".*

However, there are views from Hilary (45-54 years), Jilly (55-64 years), Phyllis (55-64 years) and Rebecca (35-44 years) that packaging should not be too commercial. Both Hilary and Jilly express views that taste is the key element, overriding the packaging with Hilary stating and "yes I know it looks rubbish, but you taste it." Jilly comments:

*"But actually, I wouldn't really care what the label looks like because I really like the fish, so it wouldn't bother me at all".*

Phyllis, Rebecca and Jilly express concerns about being too professional. Phyllis comments on Moores Biscuits.

*"...oddly enough as it looks so professionally packaged it puts me off (**uncommercial**). Something that is a bit more and I hesitate to use the word 'artisan' or bit more rustic or a bit more "quickly let's write something on the back of a label and stick it on the front" appeals to me more...aesthetics, I think the look is important, but they are not too sort of cosmetically enhanced like supermarket or mass-produced food."*

Jilly does not approve of the new packaging of Olives et al as it is "more mainstream and ... it had lost its local thing going on". Similarly, Rebecca voices concerns about Craig's Farm Dairy ("a fantastic local company") becoming mainstream. Their label now:

*"...looks like a Tesco milk or a Sainsbury's milk label so they are trying to blend in with the mass-produced goods other than stand out."*

Samuel (65+ years), Hilary, Jilly and Elena (25-34 years) voiced concerns about wasteful packaging. Elena is a big recycler and she talks about cheese packaging:

*"Some of them are in this wooden box that you can get, so that can be recycled you know. No brainer. Others come in more of a plasticky material that looks more like something can be done with it, I am a big recycler you know, I have three bins you know, regular rubbish, food recycling and then everything else recycling so I try to buy things that I can recycle afterwards. So, I always look at*

*packaging and see it can be recyclable (functional) as well so that is very important for me”.*

Jilly supports this by adding that she will not go to Morrisons supermarket as they over-package: *“they shrink-wrap their peppers. What's that all about?”*

Within a broader context, but related to packaging and product presentation, some observations from Felicity’s Farm Shop are relevant. A conversation with a jam and preserves producer who was merchandising within the shop revealed that some brands had no barcodes. Producers were allowed in to replenish stock, price, check sell-by dates and merchandise their brands, a practice long-forsaken by supermarkets. This is fitting with the culture of the Felicity’s Farm shop, echoing the sentiments of Mille (35-44 years):

*“But I hope for a place like this that it doesn’t expand, but it sticks... enjoys what it does, and they don’t worry about profits so much. That if they are making enough that they keep it like that and they don’t feel that they have to get bigger and bigger and bigger and make it into a chain and, oh god, I just think that’s awful. “*

In summary, many respondents appreciated some of the packaging presentations, but there were views that the packaging should not be too commercial or wasteful. Additional cues such as the absence of bar-codes and manual pricing contribute to this theme of uncommerciality. Packaging can be both emotional, making Phyllis smile, and functional, allowing Elena to recycle.

#### **4.2.8 Discussion: Commercial or Uncommercial?**

Rosenbaum-Elliott et al. (2011) assert that tangible attributes are used as replacement signals for other attributes such as price and brand name can indicate quality. Flora supports this as she comments on the cleverness and design of the Liberty Fields and Mannabonbons packaging. These can be important trigger cues for consumer food brand choices signifying quality. However, Jilly and Rebecca are more cynical regarding the packaging and marketing activity, and concerns about over packaging and waste were raised by Samuel, Elena and Jilly.

An interesting uncommercial theme emerges, Phyllis, Rebecca and Jilly are among several respondents who feel that the packaging should not look too commercial and it should have some distance from supermarket brands. They seem aware as to what packaging and branding is trying to do and reject attempts to become more mainstream. This is consistent with literature suggesting increasing consumer cynicism in this area (Rosenbaum-Elliott et al. 2011). This is further underpinned by Samuel, Hilary, Jilly and Elena (25-34 years) voicing concerns about wasteful packaging.

The chapter now continues with the findings and discussion of the third objective (RO3):

#### **4.3. Research Objective Three (RO3): To explore the connections between the tangible attributes and the intangible associations.**

The over-riding theme that emerges is that of **doing and feeling good**. This theme emerges as the ensuing narrative works through the layers of the conceptual framework (see Chapter Two Section Six). Tangible attributes of the local food brands can help sensorially with looking at and feeling (physically touching) what is good. Functionally, consumption of local food can do good, in that it is healthy. Moving to the intangible associations, psychologically, smell can encourage and trigger positive memories, albeit connections are not always there. Choosing to consume local food brands can mean feeling good and a positive sense of self. Through engagement with the local community or within that subculture, connections appear with doing good and feeling good. Related to culture, stories from producers help with local food brands' communications and gift giving is an activity to reinforce this sense of doing and feeling good. Finally, there is another slightly less prominent theme of **culture and heritage** around local food brands around Dorset which is discussed at the end of this section.

For each layer of the conceptual framework, there is a brief reminder of the relevant literature before revealing the relevant findings, using or highlighting appropriate units of analysis. A discussion takes place around the theme of doing and feeling good. Then, there is a similar brief reminder of the literature around culture and heritage of local food brands around Dorset before discussing this theme.

### 4.3.1 Tangible Attributes Doing Good

Chapter Two, Section One established how connections are made when detecting tangible attributes: the consumer detects the stimulus through the senses from the product and how it functions, mentally processes the stimulus and registers this as a tangible attribute that is physically associated with the product.

Julie (55-64 years) illustrates how just the senses are instrumental in creating a sensorial, tangible attribute.

*“I’ve seen (**sight**) in supermarkets that sometimes broccoli has gone a bit yellowy on the crown and feels a bit floppy and rubbery (**texture**), whereas there [at the farm shop] it’s firm (**texture**) and very green (**sight**) and feels (**mental processing**) very fresh (**tangible attribute**).”*

Hence **consumer** Julie using both her sight and haptic **senses, mentally processes** this as fresh, resulting in a positive **tangible attribute** for Ferndene Farm shop broccoli. This illustrates two senses being used to detect the tangible attribute and results in the broccoli looking and feeling good. Whereas Rebecca, (35-44 years) when asked what was distinctive about Black Cow Vodka, introduces its positive functional attributes whilst acknowledging the taste.

*“The flavour (**taste**), the fact it’s a local product (**functionality**). I’m assuming (**mental processing**) as far as I know they are the only vodka made locally. So, there is the locality (**tangible attribute**) of Black Cow Vodka (**brand**)...”*

Here Rebecca acknowledges the flavour but focuses on the ‘local’ which is functional resulting in ‘locality’ being the primary tangible attribute for Black Cow Vodka. Samuel (65+ years) demonstrates functionality can stand alone:

*“Um and then we have olives, preferably stuffed with garlic ‘cause I eat masses and masses of garlic. And um if I got a cold I really will eat masses of garlic. If I’ve got a real, bad cold in the winter, I have been known to eat nine cloves a day”.*

Here the use-value of the garlic reduces the effect of the cold. In other words, consuming garlic means easing a cold and it is doing Samuel good.

### 4.3.2 Intangible Associations and Memories

As noted in Chapter Two, Section One, intangible associations can be triggered from an external source such as a newspaper advertisement (Hirschman 1980) or packaging or the brand itself. This stimulus is detected by the consumer through their senses and mentally processed to create an intangible association which is then connected with the brand. Intangible associations have connections with memory (Hirschman 1980) and Keller (1993) identifies that there are brand nodes within memory linked to a variety of associations. Franzen and Bowman (2001) refer to this as an associative brand network, whilst Dunsdon (2015) and Batey (2016) assert that this is an engram. The deeper the consumer mental processing, the stronger the associations, (Keller 1993) creating longer term memories, improving accessibility of information. Braun-La-Tour et al. (2007) note that brand meanings exist through memories. Whilst significant memory is triggered by associations (Hirschman 1980; Keller 1993) it can also be prompted by attributes for local food brands. Smell is an important conduit to deep meaningful memories (Winter 1976; Willander and Larsson 2006; Yeshurun et al., 2009).

Hilary (45-54 years) picks out the positives of the connection between smell and triggering memory:

*“I think smell is the most evocative **sense**, um absolutely. I have done some work with people with dementia and specifically did food that had smells that they might associate (**connection**) with when they were younger and things like that. Yes, it's almost always a positive thing for people”.*

Taste can evoke strong associations too. When Hilary tried From Dorset With Love blackberry jam a disturbing negative connection emerged:

← *“Mm [tasting] (**taste and stimulus**) they're nice and full of texture (**haptic**), rather than just mush (**haptic**). Really nice. As jam goes, that's really nice, just blackberry-ish.*

*Interviewer: So it's sort of intense blackberry flavour? Remind you of anything?*

*“Blackberries! ... I rarely eat them or pick them, or you know find time to do any of that. But whenever I kind of think about them (**mental association**) they have a very significant childhood memory for me, which I don't go down that road*

*because it's a bit sad because it's to do with my sister who's died (**memory; intangible association**) so I can kind of can start going off on one”.*

Here tasting the product is the stimulus – or arguably the source of external information (Hirschman 1980). There is a pleasant taste sensation, but it triggers (mental association) a sad memory (intangible association) related to the blackberry. In Hilary’s brain, neurons relating to the taste of blackberries connect to this negative memory, now related to Dorset With Love Blackberry jam (brand).

Freda (55-64 years), however recalls good associations when tasting a Lavender Blue Dundee cake:

*“I think it kind of makes me think (**mental association**) of Enid Blyton teas (**intangible association**), you know, nice, past **memories** and old illustrations (**intangible association**). The stuff my mum used to cook as well, there is part of that. Pleasant memories. Good associations.*

*Interviewer: Okay, but if you were to try to think which of those various aspects would be more important to you?*

*Respondent: I think **memory** and association (**connection**) is very important as it brings back happy times from my youth and also when I could afford to eat more cake because I knew I would burn it off (**rational decision making**). It conjures up almost an Arcadian fantasy of nice childhood and food”.*

This reflects the Arcadian or storytelling element of brand meaning identified by Brown et al. (2003) but Freda is quite rational when she considers cake versus weight gain, and this is part of the happy memory. Whilst memories may not always be an ‘Arcadian fantasy’, there are some positive recollections of unhealthy treats and brands. Rebecca (35-44 years) remembers her mother’s affordable treat:

*“.... my mum was on her own with the three of us. And back in the 1970’s ...and she always used to tell us that she never had any money. We didn’t really have a lot of big branded things and this is terrible to say because nowadays you would probably get thrown into some sort of child protection system for doing it but for a treat for us, she used to do toast with sugar on. She used to grill it with sugar on. Sugar toast that was our treat, so I've never had sugar toast since for obvious*

*reasons and I don't give it [my daughter]. I am sure though if I had a slice of sugar toast; I would say yeah that has taken me right back (**memory**)."*

Jilly (54-65 years), Flora (45-54 years) and Hilary (45-54 years), however, became almost nostalgic regarding the brands of the 1970s. Jilly says:

*"...when I was growing up, we had ... the bizarreness of living through that era of crispy fried pancakes and cod in batter and everything in a can, ...and these really weird Vesta fried rice and Findus. I won't even look at it now. I can't believe we were forced to eat it and quite surprised we didn't die of malnutrition"* [laughs].

Flora and Hilary similarly recall Findus. Hilary points out the appeal of a shop-bought birthday cake and how processed food brands were perceived very differently in the past:

*"...when I was little, my dream was to have a Findus crispy pancake you know. And they'd say "no" you know. And also, my birthday is in on Boxing Day and I always wanted a birthday cake just once could I have a shop bought birthday cake, you know, that was the height of luxury and it never happened... Whereas I had friends who were quite wealthy, and it was like they had all of this frozen and processed food and it was like wow. Where of course now it is completely the other way around"*

Memories are not always recalled as illustrated by Samantha and Carrie (55-64 years) in the previous section when discussing Felicity's farm shop's fishcakes with no reminders triggered. Julie (55-64 years) similarly didn't recall anything significant when asked if the preparation of a particular food reminds her of anything.

#### **4.3.3 Intangible Associations, Self-concept and Feeling Good**

It can be recalled from Chapter Two, Section Four that brands can act as symbols whose meanings create and define the consumer self-concept; this can be through their symbolic meaning going beyond the functional, exemplified by pens and cars that connote prestige (Escalas and Bettman (2005). Tangible attributes and intangible associations can influence the self-concept, and Bhat and Reddy (1998) demonstrate consumers can hold both rational (cognitive) and symbolic (affective) associations with a brand.

Earlier, Andrew (65+ years) displayed quite rational reasons for animal welfare, in that if you look after the animal it will taste better. However, animal welfare can trigger feelings as shown by Rebecca (35-44 years) demonstrating how she feels about herself:

*“There is a little bit about buying local products that do make me feel a little bit self-righteous (**self-concept**) though...I feel good about the fact I have gone to the effort to buy something local or indeed ethical...So, when I pick up my free range organic eggs I feel a little bit self-righteous (**self-concept**) about the fact that I've made that choice”.*

Through her consumption choices, Rebecca is feeling good. This ‘feel good’ element is shared by many respondents and is important to their sense of self-worth. For Phyllis (55-64 years) this comes from tangible attributes evidencing her feeling:

*“Um I like to support local businesses and yeah I like the thought that I am eating something that came from two or three miles down the road rather than air freighted from Venezuela. **It makes me feel better”.***

The findings support the assertion that brand associations become more meaningful the closer they are linked with self (Escalas and Bettman 2005).

#### **4.3.4 Intangible Associations, Doing and Feeling Good for the Community**

Referring to Chapter Two, Section Four, brands act as tools for social integration and this is an important source of brand meaning (Escalas and Bettman 2005) with consumers using each other as sources of information through both word of mouth and electronic word of mouth to confirm their perspectives and generate similar beliefs. Brands are social entities shaped, experienced and altered by communities (Brown et al. 2003). Communal meanings capture social representations, constructed through social interactions to produce a shared reality (Ballantyne and Aitken 2007). Brands can be the focus or perspective of the community and that the common experience draws from belonging to a specific era and its ethos (Brown et al. 2003; Campelo 2017). Local food brands can bring communities together, creating relationships and this may include a shared understanding of a common purpose such as supporting the local economy.

Connections now appear between doing good and feeling good. Many respondents mentioned supporting the community. Elena (25-34 years) illustrates this link with her self-concept, the desire to help sustain the local community and feeling good.

*“... what I think it says about me (**self-concept**) is that I am health-conscious, but I am also concerned about the local community (**sub-culture**) and being able to support it in different ways...I will buy things that support people locally that will help them continue doing that ...things that are better to us because of our community (**subculture**) because if our community grows we grow you know?.....But when you do it makes you **feel good** that you are doing something for the local community or supporting them. It is just the **feel-good** factor that plays into that whole thing”.*

There is a connection here with personal well-being and community well-being. The inference here is that if you do good (by supporting the community) it makes you feel good, suggesting that doing good is an antecedent. Local food brands such as Felicity’s can be the focus of the community as established by Carol (35-44 years), Mary (55-64 years), Millie (35-44 years) and Jack (35-44 years) who adds further local retailer support:

*“But the money is getting into the shop and is paying the staff wages here which then they are going to spend locally rather than in a supermarket. I think ... a bit different from some people, I guess. We go to the butcher and the baker to buy our meat every day. We go to the green grocers to buy the vegetable that we eat for tea.... From the bakers we buy the bread and then we just top up things from the supermarket, just for things we can’t find.”*

Jack identifies a connection with supporting the community of local shopkeepers and spending money locally helping the economy.

Eating is a communal and sociable activity illustrated by Julie (55-64 years).

*“... food - the whole sharing of things and sitting around a table and talking, being a family and communicating together I think, and we always sit at the table to have dinner, that is one of the things I insist on, well Mark does as well”.*

Hilary, (45-54 years) adds:

*“And you know all of these things are interlinked really and I think the fact um that the fact companionship is to do with bread, sharing bread with others is you know, very relevant. I am really passionate about it”.*

Flora (45-54 years) picnics on the beach with her family and friends. This is “*important communal eating*”. She expands the notion of feeling good to include doing good through her Friday night supper experience with Trill Farm run by the ex-Neal’s Yard owner. The brand employs ex-offenders and those with troubled backgrounds to help deliver the service. Supper is prefaced by an inspiring talk from an environmentalist, for example. Flora describes this as:

*“an idyllic experience with strong values - and it feels like you are doing some good when you visit. Provide good, eat good, doing good”.*

This experience is shared with those that have similar charity or food interests, living locally. The supply of seasonal home-grown vegetables, the consumption of organic meat and the knowledge that the farm protects and conserves the environment and local wildlife help evidence her last phrase. This sociable gathering helps to confirm their perspectives, generating similar beliefs stimulated from the inspiring talks. In other words, these communal meanings capture social representations, constructed through social interactions to produce a shared reality (Ballantyne and Aitken 2007).

Contrasting with consuming local food brands in a social situation, both Hilary (45-54 years) and Rebecca (35-44 years) mention how they feel when preparing food and eating on their own. Rebecca talks about a different experience when her daughter had left to study in America:

*“So, we’re usually talking while we are cooking, and it was suddenly like not only I have no one to talk to when I cook, but also I’ve got no one to share it with after I’ve done it. It was a completely different experience and then it suddenly became about well instead of getting excited about what I’m going to have for dinner tonight and being a social being all of that type of stuff I would just have whatever was in the cupboard.”*

### 4.3.5 Intangible Associations: A Good Story is a Gift

A reminder from Chapter Two, Section Four, notes that the cultural meaning of a brand is a common theme recognised by many brand-meaning scholars (e.g. Eckhardt and Houston 2002; Kates and Goh 2003; Brown et al. 2003). The latter identify the '4A' concept of cultural brand meaning including allegory (brand stories), arcadia (idealised community) aura (brand essence), and antinomy (contradiction or paradox). Whilst the psychological, subcultural and cultural associations have all been articulated separately, Brown et al. (2003) note they can overlap, and consumers use both cultural stories from producers but add their "*own idiosyncratic viewpoints, needs, goals, and experiences*" (p.30). They fuse tangible attributes with intangible associations shown by their brand's allegorical context to reveal a meaning that is "*...moral, functional, and yet prone to individualization through consumer storytelling*" (p.23). Consumers use products for their utility as well as their symbolic meaning (Veloutsou and Moutinho 2008; Levy 1959) and Martin et al. (2005) call for more research to understand the relative importance of these elements.

Elena, (25-34 years) reinforces the storytelling aspect:

*"I actually know that farmer because ...I have heard his **story** and I have touched it. I think that sentimental value really adds to that want to buy something local and make a difference in the local community so that's why. So, I think hearing **stories** from local producers really makes a difference for somebody to go out and buy it. Or if you see their name on a package or a brand, like oh, I know that person or I know their **story**, I will buy that".*

Elena believes that producer stories are influential in purchasing local food brands. Her viewpoint is that the stories create sentimentality and encourage local community support. The theme of doing and feeling good emerges again when she says she knows where the money is going to: "*good people that will continue producing good cheese that's good for the local community*". Interwoven with the sentimental feelings is tangible economic support for the producers and the community. This reflects Brown et al.'s (2003) assertion that consumers are using local cultural producer stories, but Elena is adding her own idiosyncratic perspective.

Flora (55-64 years) likes to use local brands (e.g. Mannabonbons chocolates) when giving dinner parties and local food brands provides conversation, and they may be construed as

socially visible and symbolic. Whilst the meal is about discovering different tastes it can also send signals about social approval. Arguably, her experience at Trill Farm may be viewed as relatively exclusive and prestigious, relating to her sense of self (Solomon 2017). Keller (1993) asserts that symbolic benefits relate to underlying needs for social approval or personal expression and outer-directed self-esteem. Nonetheless she wants to understand a brand's provenance, where it comes from and is concerned with food/air miles. She wants to do good by supporting local producers, as they can create skills and generate employment. Therefore, she is consuming local food brands both for their symbolic meaning and their utility (Veloutsou and Moutinho 2008; Achenreiner and John 2003; Morgan and Reichert 1999; Levy 1959).

Gift giving is one activity that can engender the notion of doing and feeling good; as discussed in Chapter Four, Section Four, Larson and Watson (2001) think it appropriate to allowing intangible feelings to be explored as well as the object values of the gift. There are four values of gift giving: economic, functional (tangible), social, and expressive values (intangible). Gifts can be valued for their economic worth and their functional or utilitarian attributes. Intangible values include social value, how gifts can establish social ties and maintain relationships. Expressive values capture some perspective of the donor and gifts are rarely considered as distinct from the giver, gifts are expressive of the self (Sherry 1983).

Many respondents mentioned that they like to give local food brands as gifts. Hilary (45-54 years) notes the combination of a functional and aesthetic element.

*“...it's the combination of unfussy and earthy packaging (**functional**) which is also a bit artistic (**symbolic**) that gives over the idea of both practical and special. Appeals to my William Morris philosophy!”*

Her gifts therefore reflect both the functional and symbolic attributes and associations (Veloutsou and Moutinho 2008; Levy 1959; Morgan and Reichert 1999; Achenreiner and John 2003; Larson and Watson 2001). She subsequently picks up on a functional aspect:

*“Yes. If I was buying a gift, it would definitely be ethical, organic, la la la, because it's a gift. I'd rather buy a small gift that someone can eat or drink, than a bit of nonsense, do you know what I mean? So that would be an essential”.*

Jilly (55-64 years) considers gift giving from her perspective:

*“I think it's partly because we are at that age where we don't want things anymore. And we're at a socio-economic level where we don't need other people to buy us things, because we buy our own things. So, actually when we get a gift or give a gift it's got to be a treat or something like that and also, I certainly don't want things which clutter my house even more than it is already thank you”.*

This is corroborated by Hilary who only likes receiving gifts that are “*useful or beautiful or have to be both*” and therefore she considers gift giving “*very carefully*”. Hilary and Jilly, when considering gifts, try to anticipate what the recipient desires without asking them, reflecting an expressive quality capturing some aspect of the giver (Sherry 1983). Flora (45-54 years) enjoys sending out local food hampers as gifts. She likes to give gifts that are useful, something that would not be put in a cupboard somewhere, which suggests an appreciation for its utilitarian attributes (Larson and Watson 2001). Jilly considers packaging as an important element:

*“Obviously there's loads and loads of local cheese, things like Blue Vinny and Godminster Cheddar and stuff like that. I tend to buy Godminster Cheddar as presents because it comes with their nice waxy packaging, so it travels really well, especially the little heart shaped ones”.*

The heart shaped packaging can enhance the gift aesthetically, but Jilly also gifts the Godminster brand because the packaging is a practical solution offering sound protection for its transport.

To sum up this theme that spans the conceptual framework, the connections between the tangible attributes and intangible associations have been illustrated by creating a theme of doing and feeling good. Tangible attributes do good by using the senses to determine how fresh vegetables are. Intangible associations can draw from memory and show linkages to senses. A positive self-concept emerges from doing good by consuming local food brands, resulting in feeling good, which can extend to doing and feeling good for the community. Gift giving allows respondents to do and feel good and stories can underpin positive reasons for purchase.

#### 4.3.6 Discussion: Doing Good and Feeling Good

The key theme that emerges from the findings is that of **doing good and feeling good** demonstrating the connections between the tangible attributes and the intangible associations; tangible attributes underpin more emotional reasons for local food brand purchase. The theme builds throughout the following narrative: respondents use their senses to look at and feel (physically touch) what is good about local food brands. Functionally, consumption of local food can do good (e.g. by being healthy and supporting for the local economy). Feeling good emerges by choosing local food brands and gives a positive sense of self. Both doing and feeling good becomes further apparent through engagement with the local community. This is reinforced through communications using producer stories and giving gifts. This discussion draws its roots from the earlier sensorial and functional objectives and shows connections with Hirschman's idiosyncratic, subcultural and cultural sets of associations.

Sensory connections contribute to the notion of doing and feeling good too. The sensory objective findings reveal that taste is so good that it compares very favourably to supermarket food brands exemplified by Hilary: *"There is no comparison really, there's no comparison. You know obviously it's better"*. Feeling good can be experienced in a haptic capacity, such as the experiencing the texture of local broccoli as mentioned by Julie or meat, noted by Rebecca, Phyllis and Harold. Senses therefore create tangible attributes that have meaning in their own right. However, feel good psychological connections are triggered by taste, exemplified by Freda eating her Lavender Blue Dundee cake, transporting her back to her Arcadian memory of childhood with Enid Blyton teas. Senses therefore provide an interesting bridge as they are present in both processing tangible attributes and intangible associations.

Within these psychological associations, the theme of both doing and feeling good is apparent. This is traced back to discussions within the functional objective. Andrew is concerned about animal welfare and says that poorly treated animals *"are stressed and therefore the meat will tighten up and you will not get the good flavours"*. It has a functional component but supports a consumer-led sentiment, recognised by numerous accreditation schemes; They ensure that reasonable steps are taken to ensure the production of products in a safe and animal welfare friendly manner (Parrot et al. 2002), albeit respondents failed to mention any such schemes. Flavour and taste is important; doing good leads to tasting good.

The consumption of local food brands reinforces the way respondents think about themselves (Belk 1988; Escalas and Bettman 2005). Feeling self-righteous unveils an aspect of Rebecca's self-concept, or in other words her belief about herself (Baumeister 1999). It makes her feel good, but it is underpinned and justified by concerns for animal welfare which is rational and reasoned support. Julie, Andrew, Hilary, Vera, Richard, Jilly and Helen share this sense of doing and feeling good underpinned by a brand's functional attributes such as support for local farmers and businesses, reduced air miles, preserving the landscape and seasonality. These provide strong reasons for consumption. The theme of doing and feeling good is fuelled by meaningful brand attributes and associations that are closely linked with self (Escalas and Bettman 2005). These arguably functional brands impact on respondents' identity construction (Belk 1988). The tangible evidence provided allows respondents' self-concepts to be justified.

Through doing good and feeling good, Elena shows how this connects with her sense of self by supporting the community. There is a connection with personal well-being and community well-being. Elena infers if you do good (by supporting the community) it makes you feel good, suggesting that doing good is an antecedent. Local farmers, producers and retailers are supported by Carol, Mary, Millie and Jack, sharing a common experience of belonging within that subculture (Muniz and O'Guinn 2001). Local food brands such as Felicity's are the focus of the community sharing a common experience drawing from its ethos (Brown et al. 2003; Campelo 2017). Implicit in the theme of doing and feeling good is the enjoyment of communal eating recognised by Julie, Hilary and Rebecca. Flora's Trill Farm experience becomes a social entity which is partly shaped, experienced and altered by that community (Brown et al. 2003) and the communal consumption of local food brands act as a tool for social integration and can be an important source of brand meaning (Escalas and Bettman 2005).

Respondents tell stories and Elena's story is threaded with rational and tangible attributes in addition to her sentimental connection. This reflects Brown et al. (2003) who, through storytelling, reveal that brand meaning is "*inextricably intertwined*" (p.23) with functional elements. Similarly, Flora displays both symbolic and functional reasons for buying local food, supporting the views of Bhat and Reddy (1998), Veloutsou and Moutinho (2008) Levy (1959), Morgan and Reichert (1999) and Achenreiner and John (2003).

Gift giving displays both functional and symbolic properties and is a source of enjoyment and satisfaction (Larson and Watson 2001) fitting within the theme of doing and feeling good. Hilary and Jilly consider gifts that specifically suit the recipient as they try to anticipate and understand what the recipient desires without asking them (Belk and Coon's 1993). This reflects an expressive quality that captures some aspect of the giver (Larson and Watson 2001) or their self-identity (Sherry 1983). Hilary, Jilly and Flora demonstrate the social value and relationship dimensions of gift giving but are conscious of the utilitarian or functional elements. Hilary demonstrates these functional and expressive dimensions when she says, "*they've got to be useful or beautiful or have to be both*". Jilly displays both expressive associations and functional with her gift of Godminster cheese. The heart shaped packaging can enhance the gift which is associated with higher levels of psychic effort (Belk 1996) and be more valued (Larson and Watson 2001). However, the packaging is a practical solution offering sound protection for its transport.

Worthy of separate discussion, around a less prominent theme, is that of the locality and its culture of the local food brands centred around Dorset.

#### **4.3.7 Culture and Heritage of Local Food Brands around Dorset.**

Firstly, with reference to Chapter One, Section 1.3.2, 'local' within the context of local food is defined as the produce coming from within a 30-mile radius (FARMA 2015; Campaign to Protect Rural England 2018) although this may be a general perception than a defined distance (DEFRA 2008). With reference to Chapter Two, Section Four, Cavanaugh (2012) asserts that local food exchanges create economic sociability. A connection of food and economic value is as important as tradition (Jackson 2002) suggesting they have geographic lives (Bridge and Smith 2003). Ilbery and Kneafsey (1998) recognise the importance of cultural authenticity, and later link this to geographic origin (Ilbery and Kneafsey (2000); geographic location can be historically related to brands and their social construction of generates value and meaning (Pike 2009; Campelo 2017). Complementing this geographical perspective, Hakala and Sjöblom (2015) recognise that place heritage connects heritage with a physical space that is a place, involving its permanence of its resident population, personality, symbols, and history. Tellstrom et al. (2006 p.138) however suggests that there can be a marketed authenticity by associating local food with an alleged origin within in a local food culture. This is

more illusory, “*a mythical reality*”. Campelo (2017) notes that materiality cannot be detached from symbolic meaning.

For many respondents, the meaning of a local food brand is linked to geography or place as illustrated by Julie (55-64 years): “*I guess it would be the geographical aspect of it*”. Locally the Dorset name generates positive recognition as corroborated by Mary (55-64 years), Hilary (45-54 years) and Carol (35-44 years) who says:

*“...I would be drawn to the Dorset. As it says Dorset on it and it’s quite nice labelling and so on. I suppose it’s quite difficult but yeah you sort of if you’re browsing you tend to pick out things quite quickly that sort of stand-out a little bit more”.*

Carol appreciates the link between culture within the commercial presentation of the local food brand (Jackson 2002) and this is reflected, together with the economic value in discussions with Rebecca and Beryl supporting local businesses and preserving the landscape. Jilly (55-64 years) comments on Dorset’s identity:

*“So, I think Dorset's got a really strong identity in terms of food brands, particularly for people who actually show a bit of interest in it. I suppose the first one I became aware of probably was the eponymous Dorset Cereals, largely because it's called Dorset...”*

Here some brands are less local, a point reinforced by Rebecca (35-44 years):

*“...they are not really local anymore.....But you can walk in to quite a number of long, major established retailers and Purbeck Ice Cream is kind of everywhere... the other two that are bloody everywhere, everywhere are Olives et al. and Dorset Cereals.”.*

She is supported by both Jilly and Flora; Jilly has spotted Dorset Cereals in San Francisco adding:

*“People who didn’t even know Dorset was a place they thought it was the name of a cereal manufacturer”.*

Both Flora (45-54 years) and Jilly would add in Denhay (bacon and cheese). Hilary (45-54 years) questions some local food brands credibility and meaning:

*“I do think there’s a pretentiousness and a non-local thing to where it’s like we’re ‘Dorset-this and Dorset-that’ and actually they are importers and packagers and that’s just bullshit. Although I bought that [tea]...and the whole experience [from Comins Tea House] was great and the guy was really good, I would, if it’s coming from China, and I understand we don’t grow tea here so that’s okay. I think I’d rather buy it in its Chinese packaging...”*

However, Jilly points out the benefits of supporting such companies:

*“I think this whole concept of ‘Dorset Tea’ is, we need to not get carried away with that. I used to share a room at college with a girl who was obsessed with Yorkshire Tea, and I thought that was stupid, so you just have to recognise that it’s a local company trying to do their best, and that’s a good thing to support”*

#### **4.3.8 Discussion: Dorset’s Place**

Whilst Dorset’s cultural heritage is not recognised by respondents through its symbols or history, its geography is acknowledged. It is this element of its culture that is apparent within the presentation of local food brands with some recognition that this has benefited the region economically (Jackson 2002). However, the ‘local’ perception is brought into question by Jilly, Rebecca and Flora as they feel some local food brands have lost the local connection and association. It is important for local brands to stay local, small and appear uncommercial to warrant support, as expressed by Millie, Jilly and Beryl. Dorset brands with national distribution might relate their success and credibility to this geographic location (Aaker 1996) generating value and meaning (Pike 2011) but this is not necessarily recognised within these findings and possibly beyond the scope of this research. Hilary has mixed feelings about brands that just assemble imported commodities, such as Comins Tea House and Dorset Tea. She questions their authenticity echoing Tellstrom et al. (2006) who recognise an illusory authenticity with this association with Dorset’s local food culture. Nevertheless, Jilly acknowledges the local benefit, and, linking to the previous theme, this is doing good. When discussing Dorset Cereals, Jilly is concerned that the Dorset name may not be associated with the county of Dorset anymore but is now associated with the name of a cereal manufacturer; therefore, meaning has been morphed (Kates and Goh 2003) and lost some positive geographic associations.

In summary, the discussion around this objective has explored the theme of doing and feeling good with local food brands around Dorset, which demonstrates a strong connection between the tangible attributes and intangible associations. This relationship is less clear when discussing how local brands leverage Dorset's cultural heritage with respondents being more critical about local food brands assembling commodities. There may be some economic good here, but brand meaning becomes more opaque.

The findings and discussion for the fourth and final research objective (RO4) is now presented. This explores both hierarchical and alternative flatter structures of meaning.

#### **4.4. Research Objective Four (RO4): To gain an in-depth understanding of how tangible attributes contribute towards any hierarchy of meaning.**

This is the final of the four objectives and it deals with how the connections are structured between the tangible attributes and the intangible associations. There are two themes emerging from the analysis of the data; firstly the '**hierarchical**' theme which originates from a laddering approach as espoused by Reynolds and Gutman (1988) and De Chernatony (2006) where tangible attributes are the precursors to intangible associations (Kapferer 2008). Secondly a '**pattern**' theme is explored which adopts an engram (Schacter 1996; Dunsdon 2015; Batey 2016) web or weaved approach. This section takes these themes in turn, firstly briefly revisiting the relevant literature as discussed in Chapter Two, Section Five, as to the current understanding concerning adopting a hierarchical position. Then the research findings are revealed, with appropriate units of analysis emboldened where helpful within respondents' quotations. Finally, a discussion takes place focusing on how the findings either support previous literature or diverge. This is repeated for the 'pattern' theme.

##### **4.4.1 Hierarchy**

Literature informing a hierarchical approach to brand meaning includes the means-ends theory by Gutman (1982; 1997), This asserts that attributes have consequences, and these reinforce values. Of note is that this approach may just achieve a consequential benefit which satisfies the consumer without moving to the top level. The benefit may not always

correlate with an ultimate desire or higher-level goals such as affecting self-concept; so, the ladder may only go so far and stops short of reaching the highest level. Means ends theory informs brand models such as De Chernatony's brand pyramid (2006) and tangible elements are relegated to lower levels and intangible elements are higher up the hierarchy. Hirschman (1980; 1998) and Holt (2004) take a similar sequenced and evolutionary position creating a hierarchy. This is also evident with use-value (Marx 1930) and sign value, the latter being viewed as more dominant referents in society (Veblen 1925; Mick et al. 2004; Holt 2004; Campelo 2017).

A hierarchy that borrows from Reynolds and Gutman (1988) ladder and de Chernatony's Pyramid (2006) is discernible within Elena's (25-34 years) comments:

*"I know the money will go to good people that will continue producing good cheese (**attribute**) that's good for the local community (**benefit**), healthy (**benefit**) and it was more about connection. ...when you do it makes you feel good (**emotional rewards**) that you are doing something for the local community supporting them (**instrumental and terminal values**)"*.

Elena further evidences the terminal values and how they affect her desired ends by saying:

*"... what I think it says about me (**self-concept**) is that I am health conscious, but I am also concerned about the local community and being able to support it in different ways"*

This illustrates an earlier theme of doing and feeling good, rooted in earlier attributes and benefits of producing a healthy product.

Flora (45-54 years) develops a hierarchy culminating in value-laden considerations and desired end states. She outlines her approach to food preparation and uses local brands such as Liberty Fields balsamic vinegar as an ingredient (**attribute**) as she cooks from scratch and won't buy ready meals. Flora feels these brands add quality and the balsamic vinegar makes any salad taste great (**functional/sensorial benefit**). A quality ingredient will make a dish as good as it can be. Flora connects this to her quality of life (**terminal value**) given by the food and "*eating by the sea*".

Phyllis (55-64 years) echoes Elena's earlier sentiments but her approach is more direct:

*“Um I like to support local businesses and yeah I like the thought that I am eating something that came from 2 or 3 miles down the road (**means**) rather than air freighted from Venezuela. It makes me feel better (**ends**).”*

Gutman (1997) acknowledges that the laddering process can stop short at the consequences or benefits and Hilary (45-54 years) evidences this with the following:

*“Someone I do some work with... actually who also works with food lives in Bridport and he goes to a greengrocer; he's just a normal greengrocer that sells veg but he sells all the misshapen (**attribute**) veg that other places won't sell. That's what, so it's cheaper (**consequence**) so ordinary people go there...”*

The inference here is that the greengrocer's product attribute of being misshapen has the functional consequence of being lower priced. However, what is intriguing is that Hilary recognises that there may be another intangible layer when she adds

*“so ordinary people go there, rather than making a whole niche out of "this is local and really lovely and it's just for", you know?” (**values**)*

Here Hilary alludes to the values, the desired end-states of existence which infers exclusivity (“and it's just for”). Within earlier discussions with Hilary she is concerned that:

*“Whereas here the farmers' markets seem to be very pretentious and they, not real farmers markets sometimes.*

*Interviewer: Tell me more about that, in what way are they pretentious?*

*Hilary: It just seems to be a way to make, you know to put the prices up. Whereas I want a farmers' market where they have dodgy odd shaped carrots, as opposed to very middle-class food I suppose really”.*

Later within the kitchen visit conversation she adds:

*“But, it's almost like local food, the branding of local food is inherently middle-class Artisan. I mean delicious I love lovely food, but it just annoys me the way it's so exclusive”.*

This parallels with Holt's (2003) bourgeois-bohemians (bo-bos) desiring food and drink brands conveying cultural sophistication with themes prevalent such as artisanship and authenticity.

There are examples of other short ladders terminating with the consequential benefit and this links with use value (Marx 1930) together with high involvement (Bardhi et al. 2012). Both Jilly (55-64 years) and Hilary (45-54 years) comment on the use of their vegetable boxes. Jilly says of her Gold Hill organics box:

*“If you get something like that, like a weekly delivery, and you don’t sequence your shopping around it you’re never going to make best use out of it.”*

Jilly is highly involved around its use-value:

*“I mean I just quite like the fact that my veg box turns up every week and I never know what’s going to be in it. And I have to think about ‘gosh what am I going to do with these things, and how am I going to plan my menu about it, and not go shopping until the day after the veg boxes has come so that I can plan around that...”*

Similarly, Hilary demonstrates that the vegetable box was very central to her meal planning.

*“... I used to sit and put everything out and I’d stare at it until I could go right - Monday I am going to make this; Tuesday I’m going to make that. ...The vegetables for the main ingredient that inspired me to make different things.”*

The hierarchy here is the attribute (fresh vegetable) leading to the consequential benefit of a wholesome meal, but there is no further obvious value expressed. There is more consideration taken around the rational thought involved with the planning and preparation.

In summary, respondents display hierarchical approaches by relegating the tangible attributes to the lower levels, then determining benefits, followed by emotional rewards and showing how this creates a terminal value. This reflects hierarchical structure as borrowed from Gutman’s (1982) laddering approach and de Chernatony’s pyramid (2006). A shortened version of this is demonstrated by both Jilly and Hilary when discussing their vegetable boxes. Here, Gutman’s (1982) full sequence of attribute, consequences and values is not taken to the full height of the ladder, in other words the hierarchy can stop short at the consequential benefits’ rung.

#### 4.4.2 Discussion: Short or Tall Hierarchies?

A hierarchical theme is apparent within the data. There is evidence of a laddering approach as espoused by Reynolds and Gutman (1988) and De Chernatony (2006) where tangible attributes are the precursors to intangible associations (Kapferer 2008). On occasions the ladder is not fully developed and stops short of reaching its desired end values.

Elena demonstrates a hierarchical set of connections apparent in the laddering process also detected in elements of De Chernatony's (2006) brand pyramid. There are attributes (production of local cheese) generating benefits (functional consequences of supporting health and the local economy), that in turn create emotional rewards (positive sense of well-being) culminating in instrumental and terminal values (positive self-concept of doing and feeling good through supporting the community). Doing and feeling good is a theme discussed in objective three and here it is rooted in the attributes and benefits of producing a healthy product.

Similarly, Flora develops a hierarchy culminating in value-laden considerations and desired end states. Liberty Fields balsamic vinegar is used as an ingredient (physical attributes) adding taste (functional/sensorial benefit). This quality ingredient improves the dish and connects to her quality of life or feeling good (terminal value).

Hilary exemplifies how a shortened hierarchy may work when referring to the greengrocer selling misshapen (attribute) vegetables leading to a consequence of being cheaper. She recognises that instrumental and terminal values can be present but rejects specific values of exclusivity that may be overlaid. The shorter ladder has more meaning for her. However, the exclusive, artisan terminal values may have meaning for people; this parallels Holt's (2004) 'bo-bos' - an upper middle class of bourgeois-bohemians, desiring food and drink brands conveying cultural sophistication, focusing on artisanship and authenticity. Hilary feels that this is pretentious, and local food brands can be '*middle-class*' with an '*artisan twist*'. The inference is that she prefers a local food to be affordable and egalitarian, suggesting shorter connections.

Holt's 1990s craft category attracting the bo-bos may not be his best example of brands seizing upon a cultural tension caused by a social disruption. Hilary's point is that there is an exclusive middle-class framing taking place and the only tension evident here is Hilary's indignation that local food should be the preserve of this social class. Whilst Holt

correctly identifies this craft cultural shift, he argues that this created ‘iconic’ food and drink brands. His sports example, immersed in the Brooklyn subculture identifying the myth treatment, populist authenticity, a charismatic aesthetic and social disruption appears to be more convincing when creating iconic brands.

Shorter hierarchies emerge supporting straight-forward connections linking attributes and benefits. Both Jilly and Hilary demonstrate the use value (Marx 1930) of their branded vegetable boxes, commenting on the thought and planning required but there is no development of any instrumental or terminal values. Franzen and Bowman (2001) have already identified several criticisms of Gutman’s (1992) laddering approach, including fit of attributes and benefits within a consumer’s set of values and personal, unclear meanings that emerge, and relative importance of meanings identified. Gutman (1997) however acknowledges that not every brand works towards an individual’s ultimate goal and this approach is more suited for symbolic brands. Here the shorter ladder focuses on the rational thought and planning around the use of a vegetable box, which gives insight into Hilary’s and Jilly’s behaviour. Inherent in the findings is any terminal values within the longer ladders are connected with a sense of doing and feeling good and the shorter ladders culminate in worthy benefits around affordability and practical, diligent housekeeping.

#### **4.4.3 Pattern**

Moving on to the second theme, findings support the development of a pattern which is supported by the development of an engram (Schacter 1996; Batey 2016) which adopts a web or weaved approach. This is discussed in more depth in Chapter Two, Section Five. Consumer’s brand engrams adopt a different system of connections revealing a pattern and reveal more connections across functional and sensorial attributes (Franzen and Bowman 2001; Batey 2016). An engram may offer a simple direct link with meaning or it may involve more links and connections, reflecting interweaving associations. Whilst the hierarchical perspective of sign value has been acknowledged (Cherrier and Murray 2004), Lee (1993) and Gottdiener (2000) argue that use-value and sign value are intertwined, reflecting notions of materiality as espoused by Miller (1987) and Campelo (2017).

There is evidence of signification demonstrating further sequential connections. Eleanor (55-64 years) comments on the colour of eggs and what this signifies:

*“I just don’t like these pale sorts of wishy-washy eggs that you get from the supermarket...See the eggs are beautifully brown and speckled and you feel like you are eating proper food”.*

*Interviewer: Does it remind you of anything?*

*Eleanor: Yes, it reminds me of an age gone by.*

*Interviewer: And tell me more about that age gone by*

*Eleanor: Well I think things were slowly produced and probably organic which makes a difference to the taste and probably they were made”.*

The brown egg colour signifies ‘proper food’ and with further probing this conjures up an ‘age gone by’ with a slower pace of food production. Here the connections, whilst sequential, may not necessarily be hierarchical. Nonetheless a deep yellow colour of egg yolks can connote completely different meanings and generate a negative reaction as evident from the responses of Hilary’s (45-54 years) group (ex-offenders, etc.) with whom she works

*“When we were doing these on Friday with the group someone thought that there was something wrong with them because they were so yellow...When you broke them, the colour was a bit too much for people”.*

A further example of a sensorial cue giving a negative connotation was Ajar tomato ketchup, stocked at Washingpool Farm Shop. Phyllis (55-64 years) reveals that its texture links to a negative association compared to the usual brand.

*“Well there are some brands that I will never deviate from having grown up with Heinz tomato sauce or Campbell's soup and Heinz baked beans. You grow up with it and anything slightly different is not quite the same.... but that tomato ketchup looks nothing like Heinz tomato ketchup. I would imagine it probably is very nice, but I wouldn’t necessarily compare it to tomato ketchup because it is so totally different. ...it’s incredibly runny...”*

With these examples, it is more challenging to discern that an attribute leads to a benefit; rather the attribute connotes a meaning, and one which is not always expected.

An intangible association, an emotion, can be treated like a tangible attribute. This is demonstrated by Patsy (45-54 years) and Hilary. Patsy raves about Hilary's cooking.

*"She is, I can tell you seriously, the best cook. I mean anything that she makes. She's got this magic ingredient in that everything she cooks ...there isn't another word for it, it's love that she puts in the food".*

Oblivious to this discussion, Hilary says:

*"To finish saying what we were just saying, I try and spend even just two minutes focusing and kind of putting the intention of love into it. Even though it may be very chaotic, and this and that you know I believe that that's something important really, the intention behind things".*

Love has become an ingredient, an attribute.

Flora (45-54 years) connotes meanings around brands with which she is involved developing narratives including justifications. She talks of a producer (Karen) who *"has the passion"* to produce a quality product such as Mannabonbons. With echoes of Holt's 'bo-bos', the website description is "Fresh Natural Artisan Chocolate" This is 'handmade' chocolate, using "organic, ecologically and ethically sourced ingredients" (Mannabonbons 2017). Flora admires that the producer is doing good by bringing employment to the area and has the ideal skills to produce such a quality product.

Flora describes the *"simple quality ingredients"* with no additives (**attributes**) made into chocolate with distinctive brown sleeve packaging (**attribute**) that is *"highly tactile"* (**benefit**) and offers *"a good opening experience"* (**benefit**). Distributed in only around 10 outlets, it encompasses the producer's own passion and her own skill (**psychosocial and functional consequences**). It can be found in Fruits of the Earth in Bridport and it needs to be kept refrigerated. It offers simplicity (**terminal value**).

Whilst there is evidence of a hierarchical approach here, there are additional attributes such as distribution. It also needs to be refrigerated and this is justified by Flora suggesting this process:

*"...treats it with respect, it reflects the organic nature of the food, it's natural life, it's perishability and this somehow needs more thought..."it was almost as if it was a living thing... "*

Local food brands such as Mannabonbons involve associations such as “*love, passion and nurture – all instrumental in their production*”. There are many attributes and associations around Mannabonbons chocolate for Flora, too many for a hierarchical ranking so alternative interwoven arrangements can be considered.

Flora interweaves connections exemplified by when she speaks of locally reared lamb from ‘Tom’s Farm’ close to Eggardon Hill. She says: “*This is where comes from, its provenance, its reality*”. When probed as to what ‘real’ means for her, a further set of associations are given:

*“Yes, it represents the value, the effort gone to, the cooking from scratch, the experience, the education, the eating together, the social, the love and energy – all of this is connected with real”.*

Many connections are apparent but no obvious hierarchy. Rebecca (35-44 years) creates an attribute- driven engram when she remarks on Black Cow vodka:

*“The flavour, the fact it's a local product (**attribute**). I'm assuming as far as I know they are the only vodka made locally. So, there is the locality (**attribute**), there is the interesting nature of its production process (**attribute**), which makes it unique as well, and the packaging (**attribute**). It is expensive (**attribute**) as vodka goes but the packaging is pitched at that more pricy market. But yeah it's a really good product”.*

In summary, respondents demonstrate signification and associations with the colour of eggs yolk and Ajar’s runny tomato ketchup. An emotion is reframed as an attribute. Flora contrasts a hierarchical structure of meaning with a flatter linked set of attributes and associations, creating a pattern. Rebecca creates a pattern with mainly tangible attributes.

#### **4.4.4 Discussion: Pattern**

Sign value and signification is illustrated by Eleanor connecting egg colour with connoting ‘*proper food*’. This links with a nostalgic picture of an ‘*age gone by*’ when things were ‘*slowly produced*’. Here the connections, whilst sequential, are not hierarchical and do not culminate in any terminal values, albeit she creates some elaborate intangible meanings from her original egg colour cue. Reminiscent of the discussion within research objective two when sensory congruency was discussed, Phyllis observes

that the runny nature of Ajar tomato ketchup does not connect with her understanding and meaning of tomato ketchup because the wrong sensory cue is given.

‘Love’ is an emotion and typically can become a psychosocial consequence; however, it becomes an ingredient for Hilary’s friend, Patsy and for Hilary herself. The reframing of ‘love’ as an ingredient or even an attribute, challenges the earlier hierarchical approach that assumes that it is a psychosocial consequence. It is noteworthy, nonetheless, that Hilary’s intention is that Patsy feels loved because of consuming the food she has so carefully prepared for her.

Connections therefore do not always follow a neat, sequenced, orderly approach; rather they appear to weave their own pattern. This may come through a story-telling approach as told by Flora describing Mannabonbons chocolates. A selection of attributes is identified, ranging from the ingredients, the brand’s distribution, its packaging and the need for refrigeration. This latter attribute is then associated with ‘*respect*’. It is organic and has a ‘*natural life*’ and the narrative weaves around this potentially negative brand attribute justifying the need to refrigerate. Flora interweaves attributes and associations in an emergent complex pattern. Production connects with ‘*love, passion and nurture*’ for Mannabonbons. She mixes ‘*provenance*’ and ‘*reality*’. A set of connections that she might hold for ‘*real*’ may consist of “*value*”, “*effort*” “*cooking from scratch*”, “*experience*”, “*education*” “*eating together*” “*social*”, “*love*” “*energy*” - “*all of this is connected with real*”. There is no hierarchy. Earlier, in section 4.3.4 Flora described her experiences relating to Trill Farm; this is another example where attributes and associations can interweave and can be exemplified as a pattern, shown in Figure 27.

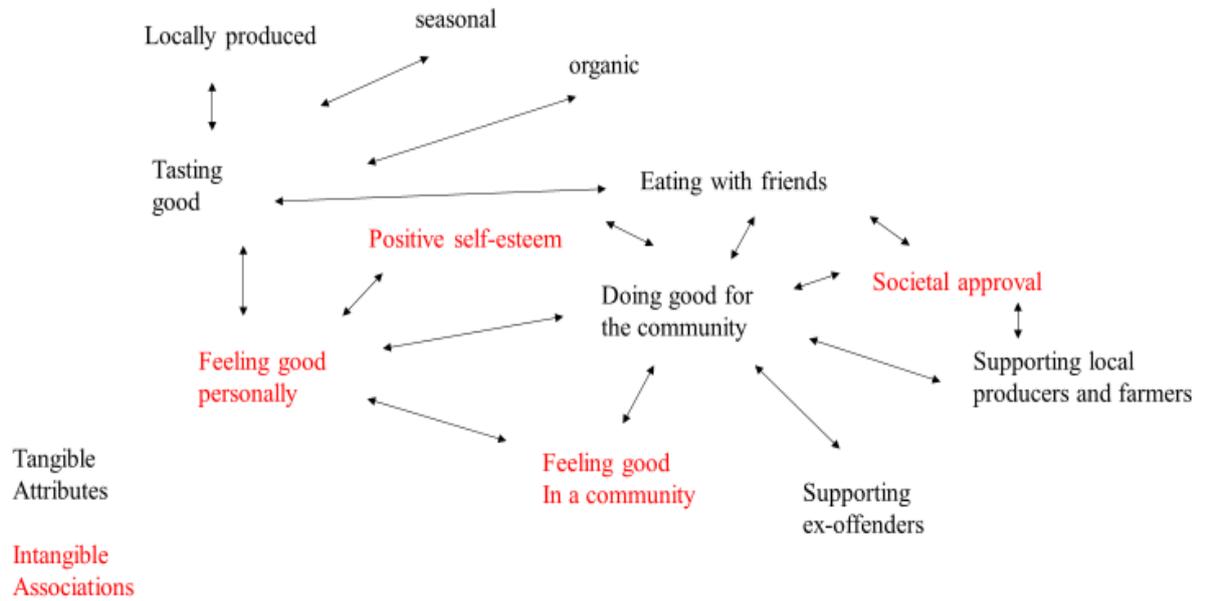


Figure 27: Flora's Pattern of Attributes and Associations for Trill Farm.

This develops the idea of the engram and it shows which elements are tangible attributes and which are intangible associations. It contains functional attributes such as 'locally produced', 'seasonal', 'organic', 'supporting ex-offenders' and 'supporting local producers and farmers'. 'Tasting good' is a sensorial attribute that connects with 'locally produced', 'seasonal', and 'organic'. 'Doing good for the community' is a functional attribute connecting with 'supporting ex-offenders' and 'supporting local producers and farmers'. Furthermore, feeling good associations such as 'feeling good personally' connects to 'tasting good' and 'feeling good for the community'. 'Feeling good for the community' connects with 'Feeling good personally'. 'Feeling good personally' relates to her self-concept and this may generate positive self-esteem. Societal approval may stem from like-minded company that also offers social integration. This is a simple pattern of tangible attributes and intangible associations; there may be further attributes and associations connected to those shown. This pattern is lodged in Flora's memory and represents what Trill Farm means to her. In contrast Rebecca's engram for Black Cow vodka consists mainly of attributes including provenance, the production process, packaging, price and the product.

Patterns can either be simple or more elaborate, encompassing connections across sensorial, functional, psychological, sub-cultural and cultural layers of meaning. These create different neurons in the brain that relate to one another and create a pattern of connections and a record of the event. Flora's pattern contains functional components, but it evolves both Franzen and Bowman's (2001), Dunsdon's (2015) and Batey's (2016) network and engram examples by developing further the self-concept, self-esteem and communal associations. More extensively this pattern of attributes, associations and their relationships, are influenced by her stimulated senses, gestures, any functionality, her past experiences, her socially shared meanings and any associated cultural attachments. Of note is that any dichotomous divide between tangible and intangible is not apparent with this approach. This contrasts with hierarchical structures where tangible attributes are relegated to the lower levels. The engram reflects a more holistic signification approach as espoused by Lee (1993) and Gottdiener (2000). However, there is little evidence here that materiality is "*soaked by symbolism*" as asserted by Campelo (2017, p.77).

This chapter has identified themes in the data that have been discussed in relation to the objectives set. The next chapter develops all these discussions and considers their implications and contributions to knowledge within the arena of understanding the tangible attributes and their contribution to brand meaning.

## **Chapter Five: Conclusion**

### **5.0 Overview**

This study has explored the important contribution that tangible attributes (sensorial and functional) make to brand meaning, therefore filling a gap in brand meaning knowledge and complementing the previous intangible associations literature in this area. The role of tangible attributes has been researched including the sensorial and functional attributes, their connections with intangible associations and the contribution they make to any hierarchy of attributes and associations.

This small-scale study has taken a framework initially developed by Hirschman nearly 40 years ago. The tangible attributes and intangible associations have been revisited and her direct sensory attributes and idiosyncratic, subcultural and cultural associations have been updated and enhanced with more recent scholarly contributions. Attention has focused on the contribution the senses make to brand meaning and a new functional layer has been added creating relevant pillars of knowledge to be explored with 21<sup>st</sup> century consumers in the context of local food brands.

The literature review determined the appropriate theoretical pillars upon which to base the conceptual framework. This was then instrumental in underpinning the research objectives and the quasi-ethnographic fieldwork and interviews. The resulting findings have informed the conclusions and are now synthesised into implications for updating brand meaning theory. This chapter will discuss conclusions arising from the findings, together with considering the implications for theory. Furthermore, it discusses the original contributions to knowledge, notes any limitations, provides areas for future research and lists the author's publications and conference papers connected with this research.

Hirschman's (1980; 1998) approaches, were highly appropriate as they reflected the meaning of meaning as espoused by Linton (1936), Lindesmith and Strauss (1949) and Gould and Kolb (1964). Her framework has now been adapted to include an updated interpretation of tangible attributes, including the sensorial, and functional, and intangible associations; this is captured in the conceptual framework (see Figure 14 in Section 2.6). Earlier literature was synthesised to reveal that the meaning of meaning demonstrates

patterns of associations that one object has with others with which it is connected. These associations may be influenced by a consumer's stimulated senses and gestures, any functionality of the object, personal past experiences, socially shared meanings and their associated cultural meanings and attachments. Meaning is relational and emerges because of how these associations connect with one another.

## **5.1 Conclusions**

The conclusions of the research are now presented together with their implications for theory.

### **5.1.1 Tangible attributes can have meaning, both sensorially and functionally.**

The first two objectives explored both the contribution of the sensorial and functional objectives and it is concluded that these tangible attributes for local food brands have meaning. Sherry (2005) argues that tangibility can offer "*an immediate source of meaning*" (p.54) which is now evidenced by local food brands within this research.

Hirschman (1980) asserted that the direct sensory component of her layers of meaning was objective, and direct sensory elements did not vary amongst consumers, thus dismissing their contribution to meaning. Together with Holbrook in 1982, she coined the terms afferent, connecting with direct sensory, and efferent, linking with multisensory. This study can conclude that taste was the most important sense within the category of local food brands. On occasions there were no further connections or associations and biting into Felicity's Fish Cakes simply connects with tasting good. This single sense approach generates a straightforward meaning in an afferent capacity. Therefore, a direct sensory afferent position of taste produces brand meaning.

Nonetheless, this afferent perspective can be blurred by vivid and imaginative cross-modular descriptors that borrow particularly from the haptic sense to help describe and give meaning to taste such as using adjectives like 'earthy' and 'powdery'. Arguably this adopts a multisensory perspective as this involves other senses; however, definitions of multisensory (e.g. Hultén) are silent on cross-modular involvement.

Secondly, it can be concluded that functionality creates meaning for local food brands. Use-value (Marx 1930) creates functional meaning; the benefits of animal welfare can lead to better tasting meat. This supports Franzen and Bowman (2001) who assert that brand meaning can flow from functional attributes and is apparent here within in local food brands.

### **5.1.2 Incongruity across the senses is acceptable by consumers and creates distinctiveness when recalled in memory.**

Furthering the understanding of the senses using local food brands, a notion of incongruity emerged from the data, through brands such as Black Cow Vodka and both Woolsery and Godminster cheeses. Contrary to previous scholars' assertions, (Wansink et al. 2005; Hoegg and Alba 2007; Yeomans et al. 2008; Elder and Krishna 2010; Spence 2012; Calvert and Pathak 2015) meaning is not always enhanced by the senses being aligned and congruent. Of note is that these scholars' methods are quantitative; this research departs from previous research approaches, used within both local food and sensory congruency fields of literature, by using quasi-ethnographic methods, thus executing empirical work that has not been done before. The research methods facilitate uncovering this notion of incongruity through the rich data generated. This study finds that incongruity is noticeable as demonstrated by the taste and appearance being at odds with Black Cow Vodka. Similarly, observations regarding misshapen vegetables do not adversely impact on taste.

Stach (2015) notes that consumers can accept a moderate level of incongruity, through peripheral clues exemplified by Google frequently changing its logo; this can stimulate mental processing, improving brand evaluation. This study goes much further. It employs quasi-ethnographic methods, which reveal that incongruity across the senses creates brand meaning, arising from the consumption of local food brands. This has implications for creating patterns of brand meaning. The pattern of relationships across the senses is not congruous here and the dis-harmony created here stimulated respondents to comment on the brands affected such as Rebecca with Black Cow Vodka. The pattern of associations has become more distinctive and enriched, so the meaning is more memorable and deeper. Congruency may not be necessary as it is the pattern that creates meaning and not consistency across the set of associations.

### **5.1.3 Consumers are highly involved with consumption choices in the local food brand category.**

Through the exploration of functional attributes, it was found that in the local food brand category respondents are highly involved. This runs counter to current thinking. Grocery brands are chosen with little deliberation, and on habit and experience (Rosenbaum-Elliott et al 2011; Batey 2016). Involvement was not a focus for scholars investigating consumer drivers for buying local food (Treagear and Ness, 2005; Roininen et al. 2006; Kemp et al. 2010; Dukeshire et al. 2011; Pearson et al. 2013) within the local food category. Involvement is demonstrated here by respondents' scrutinising labels and by the considered planning, preparation and use of Gold Hill Vegetable boxes. The cost of local food brands is carefully considered, showing the extent of involvement but also relates to rational and considered decision making. Decision-making is more considered in this category, with respondents deliberately seeking out local producers to support the local economy and are conscious of animal welfare credentials. This is more than just meeting straight-forward utilitarian basic needs. The use-value behind locally branded vegetable boxes and sausages as a means for ingredients for other meals, suggests involvement and creative thinking. Local food brands therefore generate high involvement and considered decision making, with occasional creative solutions, to meet consumer needs.

### **5.1.4 Tangible attributes connect with intangible associations, contributing to a positive self-concept and a shared ethos, through the notion of doing and feeling good.**

By exploring the tangible attributes connections to intangible associations, a theme of doing good and feeling good emerged. Sight and haptic senses can identify what is good about local food brands by appreciating what tastes, looks, and feels (physically touching) good. Functionally, consuming local food brands can be healthy and support both animal welfare and the local economy, so doing good.

Furthermore, a connection between tangible attributes that 'do good' can lead to intangible associations that 'feel good'. As Sherry (2005 p.42) asserts: "*Things literally shape our ability to think*". Through their consumption choices respondents are not only doing good, but this connects with them feeling good personally. Consumption reinforces

the way respondents think about themselves (Belk 1988; Escalas and Bettman 2005). By consuming meat that has been reared with animal welfare in mind (doing good), respondents feel good.

Consumption of local food brands leads to a shared ethos and is a tool for social integration. A sense of self is gained through supporting the community, connecting personal well-being and community well-being. If you do good (by supporting the community) it makes you feel good, suggesting that doing good is an antecedent. A meal and talk given by Trill Farm becomes a social entity partly shaped, experienced and altered by that community (Brown et al. 2003) and the communal consumption of local food brands enhances social integration and can be an important source of brand meaning (Escalas and Bettman 2005).

Whilst these conclusions support previous scholarly thinking around consumption leading to notions of a positive self-concept and shared ethos, this study illustrates that doing good, through tangible attributes, to feeling good through intangible associations, is achieved by consuming local food brands. The meanings derived from local food brands provide strong motivation for their inclusion in respondents' consumption choices. Secondly and more theoretically, there are clear connections between the tangible attributes showing how they evidence the intangible associations. This theme of doing and feeling good has been explored within a recent conference paper (Eccles and Quest 2016).

#### **5.1.5 Both hierarchical and flatter patterned approaches to the connections between the attributes and associations are present.**

Arguably the notion of doing and feeling good may be construed as a hierarchical construct, however there are other brand meaning structures present. It can be concluded that there are three approaches to structuring brand meaning; this aligns with Guba and Lincoln's (1994) assertion that there may be more than one interpretation of social reality. Two approaches are hierarchical, reflecting short and long laddering approaches, and the third is flatter, offering an interwoven patterned presentation of tangible attributes and intangible associations.

Previous scholarly views have relegated tangible attributes at the expense of intangible associations (Gray and Balmer 1998; Kapferer 2008). Many brand models have subjected

tangible attributes to lower levels of meaning (Goodyear 1996; Aaker 1996; de Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley 1997; McEnally and De Chernatony 1999; Keller 2003b and Batey 2016). Laddering (Gutman 1982) has been widely adopted particularly within local food studies (Judica and Perkins 1992; Nielson et al. 1998; Zanolli and Naspetti 2002; Baker et al. 2004; Roininen et al. 2006; De Ferran and Grunert 2007; Barrena and Sanchez 2009). Within this study hierarchies are present reflecting a long laddering approach (Reynolds and Gutman 1988), including attributes, consequential benefits, emotional rewards and instrumental and terminal values. Shorter hierarchies, however, are illustrated too as meaningful benefits are gleaned from the use-value of branded vegetable boxes, but there is no development of any instrumental or terminal values. Gutman (1997) acknowledges not every brand achieves terminal values and works towards an individual's ultimate goal mentioning that this approach is more suited for symbolic brands.

Whilst this recognises previous laddering theory including both long and short ladders, this study reveals an additional solution to structuring brand meaning. Franzen and Bowman (2001) have valid criticisms of the laddering approach as highlighted in Chapter Two, Section Five. Patterns of meaning may be created from approaches using engrams (Schacter 1996) or neural networks (Franzen and Bouwman 2001). Engram examples provided by Dunsdon (2015) and Batey (2016) predominantly feature attributes. However, both tangible attributes and intangible associations can be woven into a pattern as illustrated in Figure 27 in the previous chapter. This is a flatter, non-hierarchical approach. The pattern of meaning interweaves attributes and associations with no relegation of the tangible attributes.

Such patterns are evident when considering the meaning of meaning. Earlier it was established there are patterns of associations that one object has with others with which it is connected. Meaning emerges from the connections among a consumer's stimulated senses and gestures, any functionality of the object, personal past experiences, socially shared meanings and cultural attachments. Meaning is fluid and varied, and whilst hierarchical approaches are evident, flatter, non-hierarchical, patterned approaches are present too. The analogy of meaning as a fabric of associations (Franzen and Bowman 2001) is relevant here, with more attention paid to the intangible associations present in the pattern, compared to previous engram approaches by Dunsdon (2015) and Batey (2016).

In conclusion there are patterns of tangible attributes and intangible associations, presented in a holistic non-hierarchical way, in brand meaning structures. The pattern approach may contain more tangible attributes, revealing functional connections and meanings or they can interweave with intangible associations creating more symbolic meanings. This further develops Franzen and Bouwman's (2001) assertion that meaning can therefore flow from the functional attributes and on other occasions there is an abstract meaning, and Slater's (1997) observation that meanings can be straight-forward, or they can be more elaborate.

## **5.2 Implications for Brand Meaning Theory**

The implications for developing brand meaning theory can be explained by further evolving the conceptual framework (See Chapter Two, Section Six, Figure 14). Firstly 'multisensory' is added. Multisensory has been argued as an intangible association (Hultén 2011) and described as efferent (Hirschman and Holbrook 1982). However, definitions of multisensory should be revisited to include a cross-modal involvement of the senses. There may be more than one sense contributing to the brand meaning without cross-modal involvement; in which case multisensory, as currently defined arguably can be tangible. (In)congruity has been added as this warrants attention to understand the implications for the brand meaning. Incongruity in this study has deepened the meaning of local food brands, allowing respondents to easily recall the relevant local food brands. As such it deserves further research (see section 5.5).

Meaning structures can be non-hierarchical so neither tangible attributes nor intangible associations are more important. This element has been removed from the revised conceptual framework. Many aspects of the original framework remain as Hirschman's intangible associations reflect the earlier synthesised meaning of meaning albeit this now should reflect that there are patterns *of attributes* and associations that one object has with others with which it is connected. These may be influenced by a consumer's stimulated sense and gestures, any functionality of the object, personal past experiences, socially shared meanings and their associated cultural meanings and attachments. Meaning is relational and emerges because of how these *attributes and* associations connect with one another.



each brand meaning pattern will be unique. The pattern may be affected by any congruity or incongruity demonstrated across the senses. There is no obvious hierarchy albeit there may be occasions when tangible attributes can connect with intangible associations, reminiscent of shorter and longer ladders. Equally there may be occasions when intangible associations may connect with tangible attributes lead to as exemplified earlier in section 4.4.4 by 'love' being treated as an ingredient.

### **5.3 Original Contributions to Knowledge**

This research makes original contributions to knowledge in the following ways as identified by Phillips and Pugh (2014): Firstly, it updates Hirschman's (1980;1998) layers of meaning, making it fit for 21<sup>st</sup> century brands, which is continuing a previous original piece of work. As such it brings new evidence to bear on an old issue, such as through their tangible attributes, local food brands can offer an immediate source of meaning. Direct sensory attributes can convey meaning in an afferent capacity albeit an efferent perspective is apparent from using cross-modular descriptors, borrowing from the haptic sense.

This research departs from previous methodological approaches used within both local food and sensory congruency fields of literature by using quasi-ethnographic methods thus executing empirical work that has not been done before. These methods reveal that incongruity across the senses creates brand meaning, arising from the consumption of local food brands. This runs counter to existing scholarly thought in this area, which has been derived from quantitative methods.

It synthesises brand meaning by combining additional elements such as a broader perspective of functional and sensorial meanings to psychological, subcultural and cultural layers, which is a new perspective. The functional and sensorial are areas that researchers in the discipline have not looked before in the context of brand meaning. This study contributes to knowledge in that brand meaning can flow from functional attributes of local food brands. This category generates high involvement and elicits considered decision making, with occasional creative solutions, to meeting consumer needs. Furthermore, sensorial incongruity has implications for creating patterns of brand meaning. The dis-harmony created within the patterns creates a distinctive brand meaning. Congruency may not be necessary as it is the pattern that creates meaning and

not consistency across the set of associations and this is an intriguing and important contribution to knowledge.

Furthermore, new perspectives are offered on the notions of doing good, evidenced by tangible attributes that connect with feeling good through intangible associations, by consuming local food brands. These meanings provide strong motivation to consume local food brands.

The most important new perspective and contribution to knowledge concerns brand meaning structures. Hierarchical connections across tangible attributes and intangible associations should not always be assumed. This runs contrary to the assertions of many brand and consumer behaviour scholars who have adopted a sequential, hierarchical approach to understanding brand meaning. Whilst short and long laddering approaches are evident, an additional patterned approach is present. This interweaves tangible attributes and intangible associations, in a holistic, non-hierarchical way. The pattern approach may contain mainly functional attributes, revealing functional connections and meanings. Alternatively, the pattern can have threads of tangible attributes that interweave with intangible associations creating more symbolic meanings.

These contributions add to brand meaning knowledge in an original way, offering new information to add to our understanding of this subject area.

#### **5.4 Limitations**

This small but in-depth study has adopted quasi-ethnographic methods across 24 households. Whilst the findings cannot be generalised across other brand categories, others can use these insights to make informed judgments about how they may connect with their experiences. The research design and analysis are transferable to other studies and have been reported in a way, so others may benefit from following this approach. In addition, the revised conceptual framework has been informed by this research's findings and can be transferred to another brand meaning research setting (Daymon and Holloway 2011) which benefits other researchers.

This brand meaning research study has been conducted from a consumer perspective rather than of a producer or any other stakeholder. As such it does not connect or reflect any approaches taken by producers that influence brand identity through a brand meaning

perspective. It takes place within one geographic location within the UK, based around understanding the experiences and practices of a small group of respondents who consume local food brands specific to that area. Some of the findings and implications may be specific to this study only albeit some theoretical underpinnings and research methods may be relevant to other contexts and locations.

## **5.5 Areas for Future Research**

There are plenty of opportunities for further research regarding the tangible attributes of brand meaning. The ideas and concepts presented can be developed in different contexts. Firstly, a study using the revised conceptual framework and similar methods could be carried amongst local food brand producers in the same vicinity. This would explore their notions of brand identity. Secondly a study using the revised conceptual framework with similar methods could be carried amongst local food brand producers and consumers in a different region, which would make for an interesting comparison. Potential funders may include Interreg Europe, as they fund projects concerned with improving local food brand short supply chains, thus enhancing sustainability. The researcher has good connections with researchers through international branding and sustainability conferences, together with practitioner contacts through her Board Membership with the Bournemouth and Poole Sustainable City Partnership.

Thirdly a study using the revised conceptual framework and similar methods could be carried in different brand categories, which could include mainly functional brands or mainly symbolic brands to explore the contribution of tangible attributes to their brand meaning.

Fourthly there were some interesting sensorial findings around incongruity contrasting with a plethora of cross-modular quantitative research conducted (e.g. Becker et al. 2011; De Liz Pocztaruk et al. 2011; Deroy and Valentin 2011; Spence et al. 2013). Further assessments as to how texture impacts upon taste evaluations, particularly using cross-modular descriptions to describe taste would be intriguing. However, the issue of incongruity can be studied further. It may be opportune to address this through qualitative methodological approaches that allow respondents to articulate the nature of any incongruity in different brand categories. Alternatively, existing brands that demonstrate

incongruity, such as Black Cow Vodka, can be tested for sensorial congruence/incongruence amongst a wider sample.

## **5.6 Lists of Publications**

The following are the list of publications with which the author has been associated. Some directly relate to this thesis, and others demonstrate a wider engagement with branding and local food issues.

### **Journal Articles**

Quest, J, Shiel, S. and Watson, S., 2019. Transitioning towards a Sustainable Food City. In Press. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*.

Quest, J. and Eccles, S., 2019. Tangibility and Brand Meaning: How Local Food Brands 'Do Good'. In Review. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*.

Jordan, L. and Quest, J. 2017. Brand Identity and Brand Image in Film Brands: A case study of J.K. Rowling's Wizarding World, *Journal of Promotional Communications*, 6 (1), 24-46.

### **Book Chapters**

Beer, S., and Quest, J., 2016. *A case study of Dorset and the Eat Dorset Food Festival*. (Vol. 15, A case study of Dorset UNWTO Affiliate Members Global Report Volume fifteen - Global Report on Gastronomy Tourism ed.). UNWTO.

### **Conference Papers**

Quest, J, Shiel, S. and Watson, S., 2018. Transitioning towards a Sustainable Food City. In: 17th International Congress on Public and Nonprofit Marketing, 6-7 September 2018, Bournemouth University, UK.

Quest, J. and Eccles, S., 2017. "Just taste this - what do you think?" In: AMA 12th Global Brand Conference: Sensory Branding, 26 - 28 April 2017, Linnaeus University School of Business and Economics, Kalmar, Sweden.

Birch, D., Quest, J., Shiel, C. and Memery, J., 2016. Towards a sustainable food city: The case of the Bournemouth and Poole Sustainable Food City Partnership. In: International Food Marketing Research Symposium, 13 -14 June 2016, Bologna, Italy.

Eccles, S. and Quest, J., 2016. "Eat up, it's good for you!" Local foods as brands that 'do good'. In: Academy of Marketing 11th Global Brand Conference: Brands that do Good, 27-29 April 2016, Bradford, UK.

Quest, J., 2015. To explore the tangibility of brand meaning of local food brands. In: Academy of Marketing Conference (AM2015) The Magic in Marketing, 7 - 9 July 2015, Limerick, Ireland.

Quest, J., 2015. To explore the brand meaning of local food brands. In: International Consumer Brand Relationships Conference, 21 - 23 May 2015, Porto, Portugal.

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**Appendix One: Location of Dorset on England's south coast.**



Map showing location of Dorset on England's south coast.

Dorset is primarily a non-metropolitan county, dependent on agriculture and tourism. Over half the county is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Three-quarters of the coastline is part of the Jurassic Coast Natural World Heritage Site. It covers around 2650 square kilometres; half the population lives in the south east conurbations of Bournemouth and Poole, where there are two universities, whilst the remaining half is largely rural with low population density.

**Appendix Two: Summary of Local Food Brands' location, distribution, supply chain and website details.**

Category	Brand	Place of Origin	Distribution	Supply Chain	Website
<b>Beverages</b>					
Tea	Dorset Tea	Wimborne (originally)	UK National	Producing countries include Kenya, Rwandan and India	<a href="http://www.dorsettea.co.uk">www.dorsettea.co.uk</a>
	Clipper Tea	Beaminster	International 50 countries	Producing subcontinents include East Africa and India.	<a href="http://www.clipper-teas.com">www.clipper-teas.com</a>
	Cumins Tea	Sturminster Newton	Local plus online shop	Producing countries include India, Sri Lanka and Japan	<a href="http://www.cominstea.com">www.cominstea.com</a>
	The Gilded Teapot	Dorchester	Local plus online shop	Producing countries include India, Taiwan, China, Japan and South Africa	<a href="http://www.thegildedteapot.com">www.thegildedteapot.com</a>
Coffee	Dorset Coffee Company	Puddletown	Local plus online shop	Producing countries include India, Brazil, Ethiopia, Vietnam and Sudan	<a href="http://www.dorsetcoffee.co.uk">www.dorsetcoffee.co.uk</a>
	Broadoak	Bridport	Local plus online shop	Producing countries include Columbia, Ethiopia, and Nicaragua	<a href="http://www.broadoakcoffee.co.uk">www.broadoakcoffee.co.uk</a>
<b>Alcohol</b>					
Wine	Furleigh Estate	Bridport	South of England	Locally grown grapes	<a href="http://www.furleighestate.co.uk">www.furleighestate.co.uk</a>
	Lyme Bay	Axminster	UK National	Locally grown grapes	<a href="http://www.lymebaywinery.co.uk">www.lymebaywinery.co.uk</a>
	Bride Valley	Little Cheney, Dorset	International	Locally grown grapes	<a href="http://www.bridevalleyvineyard.com">www.bridevalleyvineyard.com</a>
	Langham Wine	Dorchester	England	Locally grown grapes	<a href="http://www.langhamwine.co.uk">www.langhamwine.co.uk</a>
Vodka	Black Cow Vodka	Beaminster	International	Locally sourced milk	<a href="http://www.blackcow.co.uk">www.blackcow.co.uk</a>
Beer	Palmer's Brewery	Bridport	Local plus online shop	Hops from Kent	<a href="http://www.palmerbrewery.com">www.palmerbrewery.com</a>
	Badger	Blandford	South of England	Malt and Hops from UK and US.	<a href="http://www.badgerbeers.com">www.badgerbeers.com</a>
	Piddle Brewery	Piddlehinton, Dorset	National	Malt and Hops from UK	<a href="http://www.piddlebrewery.co.uk">www.piddlebrewery.co.uk</a>
	Dorset Brewing Company	Dorchester	Local plus online shop	Malt and Hops from UK	<a href="http://www.dbcales.com">www.dbcales.com</a>

Category	Brand	Place of Origin	Distribution	Supply Chain	Website
<b>Beverages</b>					
Cider	Liberty Fields	Yeovil	UK National	Locally grown apples	<a href="http://www.libertyfields.co.uk">www.libertyfields.co.uk</a>
Cider	West Milton Cider	Bridport	Local	Locally grown apples	<a href="http://www.westmiltoncider.co.uk">www.westmiltoncider.co.uk</a>
	Cranborne Chase Cider	Cranborne	Local plus online shop	Locally grown apples	<a href="http://www.cranbornechasecider.co.uk">www.cranbornechasecider.co.uk</a>
Vinegar	Liberty Fields	Yeovil	UK National	Locally grown apples	<a href="http://www.libertyfields.co.uk">www.libertyfields.co.uk</a>
	From Dorset With Love	Blandford	International	Some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.fromdorsetwithlove.co.uk">www.fromdorsetwithlove.co.uk</a>
Juice	Dorset Nectar	Bridport	UK National	Locally grown apples	<a href="http://www.dorsetnectar.co.uk">www.dorsetnectar.co.uk</a>
<b>Dairy</b>					
Milk	Craigs Farm Dairy	Osmington Mills	Local	Local herds	<a href="http://www.craigsfarmdairy.co.uk">www.craigsfarmdairy.co.uk</a>
	Crook and Churn dairy	Blandford	Local	Local herds	<a href="http://www.crookandchurn.co.uk">www.crookandchurn.co.uk</a>
	Woodlands dairy	Blandford	UK National	Local herds	<a href="http://www.woodlandsdairy.co.uk">www.woodlandsdairy.co.uk</a>
Butter	Longman's	Yeovil	South England	Local herds	<a href="http://www.longmancheese.co.uk">www.longmancheese.co.uk</a>
Cheese	Woolsery	Dorchester	Local	Local herds	<a href="http://www.dorsetlife.co.uk/2015/07/taste-of-dorset-woolsery-cheese">www.dorsetlife.co.uk/2015/07/taste-of-dorset-woolsery-cheese</a>
	Godminster	Bruton, Somerset	UK National	Local herds	<a href="http://www.godminster.com">www.godminster.com</a>
	Dorset Blue Vinney	Sturminster Newton	UK National	Local herds	<a href="http://www.dorsetblue.com">www.dorsetblue.com</a>
	Westcombe Dairy	Evercreech, Somerset	South England	Local herds	<a href="http://www.westcombedairy.com">www.westcombedairy.com</a>
Yoghurt	Dorset Dairy Co Ltd	Sturminster Newton	South England	Local herds	<a href="http://www.thedorsetdairyco.com">www.thedorsetdairyco.com</a>
Ice Cream	Purbeck	Wareham	UK National	Local herds	<a href="http://www.purbeckicecream.co.uk">www.purbeckicecream.co.uk</a>
	Barford	Wimborne	Local	Local herds	<a href="http://www.barford-icecream.co.uk">www.barford-icecream.co.uk</a>
	Baboo Gelato	Bridport	Local	Local herds and locally grown fruit	<a href="http://www.baboogelato.com">www.baboogelato.com</a>
<b>Grocery</b>					
Honey	Field Honey	Wareham	Local plus online orders taken	Local Bees	<a href="http://www.fieldhoney.co.uk">www.fieldhoney.co.uk</a>
Jams/Preserves/Chutneys	Bunnies Love	Chard, Somerset	Local	Local produce	no website
	The Wobbly Cottage	Beaminster	Local plus online shop	Some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.thewobblycottage.co.uk">www.thewobblycottage.co.uk</a>
	Ajar of	Sturminster Newton	Local plus online shop	Some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.ajar-of.co.uk">www.ajar-of.co.uk</a>

Category	Brand	Place of Origin	Distribution	Supply Chain	Website
<b>Beverages</b>					
Olives/dressings/oils/nuts	Olives et al	Sturminster Newton	Local plus online shop	Mediterranean ingredients	<a href="http://www.olivesetal.co.uk">www.olivesetal.co.uk</a>
	Mr Filberts	Glastonbury	UK National	Ingredients from both local sources and overseas	<a href="http://www.mrfilberts.com">www.mrfilberts.com</a>
Chocolate	Chococo	Swanage	Local plus online shop	Cocoa beans from countries including Madagascar, Venezuela and Vietnam; some local sourcing.	<a href="http://www.chococo.co.uk">www.chococo.co.uk</a>
	Mannabonbons	Bridport	Local	Some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/MannaBonbons">www.facebook.com/MannaBonbons</a>
	House of Dorchester	Dorchester	International	Some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.houseofdorchester.com">www.houseofdorchester.com</a>
	Chocami	Dorchester	Local plus online shop	Some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.chocami.co.uk">www.chocami.co.uk</a>
Biscuits	Moore's Biscuits	Bridport	Local plus online orders taken	Some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.moore's-biscuits.co.uk">www.moore's-biscuits.co.uk</a>
	Thomas Fudge	Stalbridge	National	Some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.thomasfudges.co.uk">www.thomasfudges.co.uk</a>
	Honeybuns	Holwell, Dorset	UK National	Local bees and some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.honeybuns.co.uk">www.honeybuns.co.uk</a>
<b>Bakery</b>	Evershot Bakery	Evershot	Local	Some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.evershotbakery.com">www.evershotbakery.com</a>
	Longcriche Bakery	Wimborne	Local	Some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.famoushedgehogbakery.co.uk">www.famoushedgehogbakery.co.uk</a>
<b>Vegetable Boxes</b>	Goldhill Organics	Child Okeford	Local	Locally grown	<a href="http://www.goldhillorganicfarm.com">www.goldhillorganicfarm.com</a>
	Holton Lee	Holton Heath	Local	Locally grown	<a href="http://www.holtonlee.org">www.holtonlee.org</a>
	Berry Hill Farm	Throop	Local	Locally grown	<a href="http://www.berryhill-farm.co.uk">www.berryhill-farm.co.uk</a>
<b>Meat</b>					
Processed meats	Capreolus	Rampisham	South of England	Local Herds	<a href="http://www.capreolusfinefoods.co.uk">www.capreolusfinefoods.co.uk</a>
	Denhay	Bridport	UK National	Local Herds	<a href="http://www.denhay.co.uk/">www.denhay.co.uk/</a>
Farm meats	Bellair Haye Pork	Morcombelake, Dorset	Local	Local Herd	<a href="http://www.farmsnotfactories.org/articles/bellair-haye-farm-returning-to-the-land">www.farmsnotfactories.org/articles/bellair-haye-farm-returning-to-the-land</a>
	Wylde Meadow farm	Bridport	Local plus online orders taken	Local herds	<a href="http://www.wyldmeadowfarm.com">www.wyldmeadowfarm.com</a>
	Denhay	Bridport	UK National	Local Herds	<a href="http://www.denhay.co.uk">www.denhay.co.uk</a>
Butchers	WC Clarke and Son	Sixpenny Handley	Local	Local Herds	<a href="http://www.clarkesthebutcher.co.uk">www.clarkesthebutcher.co.uk</a>
<b>Fish</b>					
Smoked Fish	Chesil Smokery	Bridport	South of England	Sourcing within the UK waters	<a href="http://www.chesilsmokery.co.uk">www.chesilsmokery.co.uk</a>
This is a selection of local food brands and the list is not exhaustive.					
Please check their websites for their full range of brands.					

Category	Brand	Place of Origin	Distribution	Supply Chain	Website
<b>Beverages</b>					
Tea	Dorset Tea	Wimborne (originally)	UK National	Producing countries include Kenya, Rwandan and India	<a href="http://www.dorsettea.co.uk">www.dorsettea.co.uk</a>
	Clipper Tea	Beaminster	International 50 countries	Producing subcontinents include East Africa and India.	<a href="http://www.clipper-teas.com">www.clipper-teas.com</a>
	Cumins Tea	Sturminster Newton	Local plus online shop	Producing countries include India, Sri Lanka and Japan	<a href="http://www.cominstea.com">www.cominstea.com</a>
	The Gilded Teapot	Dorchester	Local plus online shop	Producing countries include India, Taiwan, China, Japan and South Africa	<a href="http://www.thegildedteapot.com">www.thegildedteapot.com</a>
Coffee	Dorset Coffee Company	Puddletown	Local plus online shop	Producing countries include India, Brazil, Ethiopia, Vietnam and Sudan	<a href="http://www.dorsetcoffee.co.uk">www.dorsetcoffee.co.uk</a>
	Broadoak		Local plus online shop	Producing countries include Columbia, Ethiopia, and Nicaragua	<a href="http://www.broadoakcoffee.co.uk">www.broadoakcoffee.co.uk</a>
<b>Alcohol</b>					
Wine	Furleigh Estate	Bridport	South of England	Locally grown grapes	<a href="http://www.furleighestate.co.uk">www.furleighestate.co.uk</a>
	Lyme Bay	Axminster	UK National	Locally grown grapes	<a href="http://www.lymebaywinery.co.uk">www.lymebaywinery.co.uk</a>
	Bride Valley	Little Cheney, Dorset	International	Locally grown grapes	<a href="http://www.bridevalleyvineyard.com">www.bridevalleyvineyard.com</a>
	Langham Wine	Dorchester	England	Locally grown grapes	<a href="http://www.langhamwine.co.uk">www.langhamwine.co.uk</a>
Vodka	Black Cow Vodka	Beaminster	International	Locally sourced milk	<a href="http://www.blackcow.co.uk">www.blackcow.co.uk</a>
Beer	Palmer's Brewery	Bridport	Local plus online shop	Hops from Kent	<a href="http://www.palmerbrewery.com">www.palmerbrewery.com</a>
	Badger	Blandford	South of England	Malt and Hops from UK and US.	<a href="http://www.badgerbeers.com">www.badgerbeers.com</a>
	Piddle Brewery	Piddlehinton, Dorset	National	Malt and Hops from UK	<a href="http://www.piddlebrewery.co.uk">www.piddlebrewery.co.uk</a>
	Dorset Brewery	Dorchester	Local plus online shop	Malt and Hops from UK	<a href="http://www.dbcales.com">www.dbcales.com</a>

Category	Brand	Place of Origin	Distribution	Supply Chain	Website
<b>Beverages</b>					
Cider	Liberty Fields	Yeovil	UK National	Locally grown apples	<a href="http://www.libertyfields.co.uk">www.libertyfields.co.uk</a>
Cider	West Milton Cider	Bridport	Local	Locally grown apples	<a href="http://www.westmiltoncider.co.uk">www.westmiltoncider.co.uk</a>
	Cranborne Ch	Cranborne	Local plus online shop	Locally grown apples	<a href="http://www.cranbornechasecider.co.uk">www.cranbornechasecider.co.uk</a>
Vinegar	Liberty Fields	Yeovil	UK National	Locally grown apples	<a href="http://www.libertyfields.co.uk">www.libertyfields.co.uk</a>
	From Dorset With Love	Blandford	International	Some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.fromdorsetwithlove.co.uk">www.fromdorsetwithlove.co.uk</a>
Juice	Dorset Nectar	Bridport	UK National	Locally grown apples	<a href="http://www.dorsetnectar.co.uk">www.dorsetnectar.co.uk</a>
<b>Dairy</b>					
Milk	Craigs Farm Dairy	Osmington Mills	Local	Local herds	<a href="http://www.craigsfarmdairy.co.uk">www.craigsfarmdairy.co.uk</a>
	Crook and Churn dairy	Blandford	Local	Local herds	<a href="http://www.crookandchurn.co.uk">www.crookandchurn.co.uk</a>
	Woodlands dairy	Blandford	UK National	Local herds	<a href="http://www.woodlandsdairy.co.uk">www.woodlandsdairy.co.uk</a>
Butter	Longman's	Yeovil	South England	Local herds	<a href="http://www.longmancheese.co.uk">www.longmancheese.co.uk</a>
					<a href="http://www.dorsetlife.co.uk/2015/07/taste-of-dorset-woolsery-cheese">www.dorsetlife.co.uk/2015/07/taste-of-dorset-woolsery-cheese</a>
Cheese	Woolsery	Dorchester	Local	Local herds	
	Godminster	Bruton, Somerset	UK National	Local herds	<a href="http://www.godminster.com">www.godminster.com</a>
	Dorset Blue Vinney	Sturminster Newton	UK National	Local herds	<a href="http://www.dorsetblue.com">www.dorsetblue.com</a>
	Westcombe Dairy	Evercreech, Somerset	South England	Local herds	<a href="http://www.westcombedairy.com">www.westcombedairy.com</a>
Yoghurt	Dorset Dairy Co Ltd	Sturminster Newton	South England	Local herds	<a href="http://www.thedorsetdairyco.com">www.thedorsetdairyco.com</a>
Ice Cream	Purbeck	Wareham	UK National	Local herds	<a href="http://www.purbeckicecream.co.uk">www.purbeckicecream.co.uk</a>
	Barford	Wimborne	Local	Local herds	<a href="http://www.barford-icecream.co.uk">www.barford-icecream.co.uk</a>
	Baboo Gelato	Bridport	Local	Local herds and locally grown fruit	<a href="http://www.baboogelato.com">www.baboogelato.com</a>
<b>Grocery</b>					
Honey	Field Honey	Wareham	Local plus online orders taken	Local Bees	<a href="http://www.fieldhoney.co.uk">www.fieldhoney.co.uk</a>
Jams/Preserves/Chutneys	Bunnies Love	Chard, Somerset	Local	Local produce	no website
	The Wobbly Cottage	Beaminster	Local plus online shop	Some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.thewobblycottage.co.uk">www.thewobblycottage.co.uk</a>
	Ajar of	Sturminster Newton	Local plus online shop	Some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.ajar-of.co.uk">www.ajar-of.co.uk</a>

Category	Brand	Place of Origin	Distribution	Supply Chain	Website
<b>Beverages</b>					
Olives/dressings/oils/nuts	Olives et al	Sturminster Newton	Local plus online shop	Mediterranean ingredients	<a href="http://www.olivesetal.co.uk">www.olivesetal.co.uk</a>
	Mr Filberts	Glastonbury	UK National	Ingredients from both local sources and overseas	<a href="http://www.mrfilberts.com">www.mrfilberts.com</a>
Chocolate	Chococo	Swanage	Local plus online shop	Cocoa beans from countries including Madagascar, Venezuela and Vietnam; local sourcing.	<a href="http://www.chococo.co.uk">www.chococo.co.uk</a>
	Mannabonbons	Bridport	Local	Some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/MannaBonbons">www.facebook.com/MannaBonbons</a>
	House of Dorchester	Dorchester	International	Some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.houseofdorchester.com">www.houseofdorchester.com</a>
	Chocami	Dorchester	Local plus online shop	Some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.chocami.co.uk">www.chocami.co.uk</a>
Biscuits	Moore's Biscuits	Bridport	Local plus online orders taken	Some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.moore's-biscuits.co.uk">www.moore's-biscuits.co.uk</a>
	Thomas Fudge	Stalbridge	National	Some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.thomasfudges.co.uk">www.thomasfudges.co.uk</a>
	Honeybuns	Holwell, Dorset	UK National	Local bees and some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.honeybuns.co.uk">www.honeybuns.co.uk</a>
<b>Bakery</b>	Evershot Bakery	Evershot	Local	Some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.evershotbakery.com">www.evershotbakery.com</a>
	Longcriche Bakery	Wimborne	Local	Some ingredients from overseas	<a href="http://www.famoushedgehogbakery.co.uk">www.famoushedgehogbakery.co.uk</a>
<b>Vegetable Boxes</b>	Goldhill Organics	Child Okeford	Local	Locally grown	<a href="http://www.goldhillorganicfarm.com">www.goldhillorganicfarm.com</a>
	Holton Lee	Holton Heath	Local	Locally grown	<a href="http://www.holtonlee.org">www.holtonlee.org</a>
	Berry Hill Farm	Throop	Local	Locally grown	<a href="http://www.berryhill-farm.co.uk">www.berryhill-farm.co.uk</a>
<b>Meat</b>					
Processed meats	Capreolus	Rampisham	South of England	Local Herds	<a href="http://www.capreolusfinefoods.co.uk">www.capreolusfinefoods.co.uk</a>
	Denhay	Bridport	UK National	Local Herds	<a href="http://www.denhay.co.uk/">www.denhay.co.uk/</a>
Farm meats	Bellair Haye Pork	Morcombelake, Dorset	Local	Local Herd	<a href="http://www.farmsnotfactories.org/articles/bellair-haye-farm-returning-to-the-land">www.farmsnotfactories.org/articles/bellair-haye-farm-returning-to-the-land</a>
	Wylde Meadow farm	Bridport	Local plus online orders taken	Local herds	<a href="http://www.wyldmeadowfarm.com">www.wyldmeadowfarm.com</a>
	Denhay	Bridport	UK National	Local Herds	<a href="http://www.denhay.co.uk">www.denhay.co.uk</a>
Butchers	WC Clarke and Son	Sixpenny Handle	Local	Local Herds	<a href="http://www.clarkesthebutcher.co.uk">www.clarkesthebutcher.co.uk</a>
<b>Fish</b>					
Smoked Fish	Chesil Smokery	Bridport	South of England	Sourcing within the UK waters	<a href="http://www.chesilsmokery.co.uk">www.chesilsmokery.co.uk</a>
This is a selection of local food brands and the list is not exhaustive.					
Please check their websites for their full range of brands.					

### **Appendix Three: Hultén's (2011) description of Wholefoods multi-sensory strategy.**

*“In a sensorial smell strategy, the atmospheric sensations and their sensory expressions welcome customers to the service scapes with a soft intensity and at the entrance, there is a bakery with an oven spreading product-congruence scents of newly-baked bread as smell sensors. No artificial scents are used and the natural scents from fruit and cheese offer smell experiences as sensors.*

*In a sensorial sound strategy, auditory sensations and their sensory expressions appear as pop music with soft voices, through such sound sensors as stereos and loudspeakers and the choice of music, which make it possible to say that the company has a signature sound.*

*In a sensorial sight strategy, visual sensations and their sensory expressions belong to the interior with light colors like olive-green and yellow on the walls. The lighting is comfortable, with spotlights as sights sensors aimed at special products, and style through colors and lighting expresses proximity to nature. Handwritten information as sensors, give the graphic feeling of a more personal sight experience.*

*In a sensorial taste strategy, gastronomic sensations and their sensory expressions reinforce the taste experience through the interplay of other senses that allow synergies through staff who wear aprons as taste sensors, which emphasize a homely feeling and superb food. The company offers the presentation of real samples of tastes that are related to season and theme. This creates a setting where “food thinking” is part of the interior and invites customers to gain more knowledge, delight in and experience new tastes.*

*Finally, in a sensorial touch strategy, tactile sensations and their sensory expressions invite customers to touch the products, because they are accessible in dishes or straw baskets that emphasize personal contact as touch sensors. No plastic material is used, and cold and hot foods are chosen by the customers themselves. There is a cheese room as a touch sensor with stable doors to keep the temperature at the right level for the taste experience” (p. 268).*

#### Appendix Four: Summary of Pilot Respondents

<b>Felicity's Farm Shop</b>				<i>13th March 2015</i>
<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Age Range</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Time length</b>	<b>Brief description</b>
Jack	35-44	Printer		Male with young family 3 kids from Bridport
Stuart	55-64	Civil Servant		Older couple from Cornwall having visited Southampton.
Helen	55-64	Housewife		See above
Mary	55-64	Housewife		Older couple originally from Cornwall.
Andrew	65+	Architect		See above
Carol	35-44	Nurse		Wife with younger family, husband with kids age 7 and 9.
Craig	35-44	Teacher		See above
			3.5 hours	
				<i>16th March 2015</i>
Phil	35-44	Delivery driver		Regular male traveller from Ironville to Cornwall.
Steve	55-64	Local Producer		Local male charcuterie producer out shopping.
Millie	35-44	Sales person : car dealership		Female travelling to Worthing from Torquay.
Samantha	55-64	Housewife		One of two women from a female group from west Sussex staying in local holiday cottage
Carrie	55-64	Housewife		See above
Vera	55-64	Village local; housewife		Local middle-aged female; regular from the village
Richard	over 65	Surveyor		Older couple from Lyme Regis moved into area
Judy	55-64	Teacher		See above
David and Jennifer	25-34	Civil servants	4.5 hours	From Southampton travelling through

### Appendix Five: Summary of Respondents and Interactions

Pseudonym	Age Range	Date	Venue	Occupation	Time length
Harold	65+	15/03/15	Interview/ BU café	Retired male energy consultant. Allotment manager	1 hour 15 mins
Elena	25-34	09/04/15	Interview/ BU café	Female Lecturer	1 hour 15 mins
Phyllis	55-64	28/03/15	Washingp ool/ Felicity's Farm shop	Female Engineering Manager	3 hours
Hilary	45-54	27/04/15	Home Kitchen Visit	Female Community Facilitator	2 hours
Patsy	45-54	27/04/15		Female Designer	
Lily	18-24	27/04/15		Female Student	
Rebecca	35-44	03/06/15	Home Kitchen Visit	Female Social enterprise manager	1 hour 15 mins
Janey	18-24			Female Student	
Flora	45-54	09/07/15	Interview at Salt Pig Café Wareham	Female Consultancy owner	2 hours
Freda		18/07/15	Leigh Food Fair	Female civil servant	1.5 hours
Marjorie	55-64	18/07/15	Leigh Food Fair	Female school matron	
Eleanor	55-64	18/07/15	Leigh Food Fair	Retired female school matron	
Julie	55-64	24/07/15	Home interview	Female Funeral Business administrator	1 hour
Samuel	65+	18/08/15	Interview/ Hive Beach Café	Retired male haulage contractor	1 hour 15 mins
Beryl	55-64	18/08/15	Home interview	Female Parish Council Leader	45 mins
Jilly	55-64	24/08/15	Interview at Salt Pig Café Wareham	Ex-politician/county councillor	2 hours
Hilary	45-54	24/10/15	Wimborne Food Fair	Social worker	2.5 hours

24 households incl. Pilot in total

(NB 2 x encounters with Hilary =25)

## Appendix Five: Summary of Respondents and Interactions continued

### Farm Shop/Fair

Observations	Date	Time length
Ferndene Farm Shop	24/07/15	1 hour
Washingpool Farm shop	28/03/15	30 mins
Felicity's Farm Shop	13 and 16/03/15	2 hours
Leigh Food Fair	18-Jul	30 mins
Modbury Farm Shop	18/08/15	45 minutes

Total time with respondents and interactions = 32.5 hours

## **Appendix Six: Summary of observational and reflective notes for each respondent including their profile.**

These encounters are categorised by date. The first interviews largely took place in East Dorset albeit there were some restrictions on local food brand availability on occasions. Then the researcher focused her efforts over to the West Dorset area. These encounters adhered to the criteria that consumers were buying local food brands grown or processed from within 30 miles of where it was bought (FARMA 2015; Campaign to Protect Rural England 2018).

### ***Harold 55-64 years – allotment manager***

**Space:** The setting was at a University café,

**Actors:** The researcher and Harold (55-64 years), allotment manager. The researcher is an actor playing an important role in engaging conversations, information and meanings around local food brands.

Harold is on the ‘edge of retirement’ and lives around Wimborne spending much of his time at the local National Trust venue at Kingston Lacy. He is a retired engineer and frequents the local farm shop at Pamphill albeit he spent more money there when he was working. He and his wife cook from scratch evidenced by their soup-making from the vegetables from their allotment. He has grown up children. He has a real interest in local food and is aware of some local food brands and manages Kingston Lacy allotments. He had a slight agenda in that he wanted to further understand development and possible branding in this area regarding Kingston Lacy.

**Activity:** Interview

**Time:** 23/03//2015 Afternoon Interview taking 1 hour and 15 minutes.

**Observations and Reflections:** Harold was very engaged and wanted to help. He also wanted to chat! This was one of the earlier interviews and I was still getting into my stride at this stage. It took place at the University Starbucks café where ambient noise was an issue not helped as he was quite softly spoken. Whilst he was a clear local food enthusiast his knowledge of local brands was a little restricted and as such he was not able to contribute as much as other respondents later interviewed, albeit there was some useful data gained regarding the functional meaning of local Corfe Castle ale and the sensorial

texture of the Red Devon steak. To help respondents with the identification of local food brands, I can create some prompt materials.

*Elena (25-34 years), lecturer*

**Space:** The setting was at a University café,

**Actors:** The researcher and Elena (25-34 years), lecturer. The researcher is an actor playing an important role in engaging conversations, information and meanings around local food brands.

Elena was a little younger than the rest of the sample and has a young child; attitudinally she empathises with rural activities exemplified by her engagement with the farmer of whom she spoke. It assumed that her household income is reasonable, as her partner is working too, allowing the ability to choose local food brands. Elena likes to cook from scratch exemplified by her recipe discussion. She demonstrated her shopping skills through her focus particularly on local cheeses and is very engaged with local food brands. She is well educated as she is a lecturer and studying for a PhD.

**Activity:** Interview with prompt materials

**Time:** 09/04/2015 Afternoon Interview taking 1 hour and 15 minutes.

**Observations and Reflections:** This was an early interview and the setting at the University café was a little busy, providing occasional distractions but we did manage to have a good discussion about local food brands. The prompt materials, whilst helpful in promoting discussion around local food brands, included some that were more generic, and proved to be little vague, albeit I had thought they may have reflected the layers of the conceptual framework. So, I have decided I need to simplify the photographic prompts and focus on local food brands to elicit discussion. They also need to be considerably increased in size. Elena was limited as to where she could access local food brands, nonetheless she made some valuable contributions particularly with self-image and community elements.

***Phyllis (55-64 years), engineering works manager***

**Space:** The settings were Washingpool Farm Shop followed by a visit to Felicity's farm Shop. On the way to each venue, both actors discussed local food brands in the car.

**Actors:** The researcher and Phyllis (55-64 years), engineering works manager. The researcher is an actor playing an important role in engaging conversations, information and meanings around local food brands.

Phyllis is 55 years old and married with a 16-year-old son. She lives in Dorset and runs a small engineering works. Together with her husband, she enjoys cooking from scratch and eschews processed food given her husband's health condition. She likes shopping and has a positive attitude and curiosity towards local food brands. She frequents her local butcher situated opposite her house.

**Activity:** An accompanied shopping trip around both Washingpool and Felicity's farm shops. This was supported by conversations taking place in the car whilst journeying to the destinations.

**Acts:** Keen observation and scrutiny of local food brands. Discussion between participants. Conversations with demonstrators, shop assistants and shop owners. Slow deliberate progress around both farm shops in a structured and logical order enabling all the aisles to be covered. This included peering into the adjacent café and wandering outside to notice the outside displays of plants and surrounding environment, that included chicken enclosures, and adjacent polytunnels. Local food brand purchasing took place, including Bunnies Love preserves.

**Time:** 28/03/2015 Washingpool Farm shop and Felicity's Farm shop. Time spent was not an issue as the respondent knew in advance what was expected and was fully immersed in the experience.

**Observations and Reflections**

This accompanied shopping trip was not long after the initial pilot studies conducted at Felicity's Farm Shop. Washingpool Farm shop had already been reced whilst I was in the area with the owner previously agreeing to an accompanied shop. This was deliberately chosen to contrast against Felicity's representing a specific destination farm shop, compared to one that also is a convenient stopping off point.

Both farm shops have a plentiful supply of local food brands This was an engaging session with Phyllis immediately prior to and during both farm shop visits. Rapport was easily established. Phyllis seemed genuinely immersed in the experience and seemed very engaged with the setting, the experience and the products and brands on offer. There was detailed examination of the brands, some of which were new to her. She seemed to be trying to make considered responses and observations regarding the experience and interaction with the brands. There were lots of comments upon packaging and possibly trying to anticipate what I wanted to hear. This was her interpretation of my “marketing research”. Some interesting observations and comments emerged demonstrating further potential themes to be captured. We were both surprised at the amount of time that had slipped by whilst we were at Washingpool.

From there, after a cup of coffee in their very pleasant café/restaurant, we moved on to Felicity’s. Felicity and her son were there, and we immediately started talking building upon the previous times that I’d visited. Phyllis enjoyed these exchanges and joined in. Indeed, whilst I was talking to Felicity’s sister at Felicity’s instigation, I returned to find both Felicity and Phyllis in deep conversation about their respective dogs and the benefits of cooking mutton. As we left the premises, Phyllis commented upon how much she had enjoyed that interaction and both farm shop visits. Of note is that she had appeared to particularly have enjoyed the second visit at Felicity’s because of the social interaction with the owner. Indeed, Felicity seems to take particular trouble with her clientele in this respect. We both commented upon how Felicity had gone to some trouble to find us an ice block against which to store our meat for the transport home. On reflection I recall Felicity having similar encounters with other customers on my previous visits.

One learning from this otherwise very successful piece of research was that Phyllis was very familiar with local food brands but didn’t recognise some labels. That did not prevent her however trying to make useful comments about the packaging. A future note for the researcher is to screen other respondents a little further regarding their local brand knowledge. This combined also with the researcher’s reflections from the first two farm shop visits that there may have been a tendency on occasion to discuss local food rather than local food brands. So, this needs more thought and focus for future research encounters.

*Hilary (45-54 years), community facilitator - Kitchen Visit*

**Space:** The setting was at Hilary's home and in her kitchen in Poole.

**Actors:** The researcher and Hilary. The researcher is an actor playing an important role in engaging conversations, information and meanings around local food brands.

Hilary is a high user of local produce at home. She is a single mother with 17-year-old daughter Lily. She makes big efforts to overcome barriers to purchase by exerting greater control over her buying behaviour particularly exemplified by a later encounter at Wimborne Food Fair. She manages what income she has and made no secret that she had to be careful with money, although she views herself as middle class. She lives within the Poole conurbation but travels frequently across the county with her work. She is an ex-social worker and studied sociology at University. Hilary works with people with troubles and issues, and this includes teaching them how to cook and feed themselves so has good understanding of food and local social issues. She manages to access local food brands such as produce from Holten Lee (local community growers) but has limited access to farm shops.

**Activity:** Preparation of a meal to be consumed with Hilary's friend Patsy.

**Acts:** Conversations about local food brands including discussions with her daughter Lily's particular diet; Hilary's preparation of a Spanish omelette and pudding (see detail in the observations below). This involved peeling and chopping of vegetables and cooking on the top of the oven.

**Time:** 27/04/2015

**Observations and Reflections**

Hilary was keen to help, and she engaged with both a kitchen visit in April and later in October, we did an accompanied shopping trip at Wimborne Food Fair.

I arrived at a terraced house in Heckford Park in Poole and it was an inviting characterful property seemingly fitting with our enthusiast and reflecting her personality. Hilary is a vibrant active person, hugely enthusiastic about local food and was at pains to tell me about this passion. Her profession centres on educating people about food but this is a backdrop to the real mission which is helping and supporting people who've been through a crisis.

I entered the kitchen, which is small, but horseshoe shaped where everything is easily accessible. It was the kitchen of a cook. There were well used pans and gadgets and Hilary moved easily across the space instinctively reaching for items as she spoke. This was a woman used to this space and preparing food within it. She was preparing a Spanish omelette and as we spoke the smells starting to emerge and become increasingly appetising. I was a little disappointed that I wasn't invited to stay to taste the final dish. Her daughter Lily arrived and spoke of going to the gym. We got into conversation about how they coincided with their eating habits. Whilst there was an expressed need of how her daughter needs to eat a lot and exercise because of her size, this need was not immediately apparent to me. Obviously, her strategy was working, and Lily came across as a healthy, intelligent, thoughtful 17-year old girl.

Her friend Patsy arrived and spoke warmly of Hilary. She said that Hilary "cooks with love" which struck me as slightly exaggerated, but it was a comment upon how she prepared her food and the thought that had gone into it. I didn't see much considered thought as Hilary was cooking as it appeared to be instinctive, but clearly, she had considered my visit and what to cook in advance and how to plan the rest of the evening. This was an organised person.

Throughout her time spent cooking, Hilary's movement were fluid and practised. She could reach for a saucepan whilst keeping eye contact with me. She would become immersed in her topic and stop cooking whilst she developed her thoughts and conversed. Her process was to chop potatoes, keeping the skins on and then blanch them. She had her ingredients laid out around her – eggs, asparagus, kale. Most impressive was how she dealt with the asparagus, ensuring the whole vegetable was used, preserving the hard stalk for later soup consumption. This was a woman who knew about cooking economically and had kept these skills. She reached for a well-used skillet upon which to griddle them I was impressed and mentally noted how useful such a technique might be, cursing that I'd disposed of the skillet I'd bought a few years earlier – this was how to use one!

Hilary stood close whilst we discussed brands and wanted to confide – good rapport. Great eye contact. I was able to use some photographs of local brands to elicit comments and to check awareness. These prompts were a n improvement on those used with Elena in an earlier interview. I became very immersed with the exercise and this became more of a conversation at times rather than asking specific questions. On later reflection, I considered that some of my questions may have been leading, so took care to exclude any

resulting data from my analysis; e.g. I said: “Cooking from scratch should make sense in terms of cost shouldn’t it?” – so any answer resulting from that was discarded. This was a long interview and very useful.

Hilary was a real enthusiast such that she wanted to meet again and do more, so we did.

***Rebecca (35-44 years), social enterprise manager and daughter Janey***

**Space:** The setting was at Rebecca’s home and in her kitchen in Poole.

**Actors:** The researcher and Rebecca. The researcher is an actor playing an important role in engaging conversations, information and meanings around local food brands.

Rebecca is a single mother with daughter Janey who is at university. She works as a Manager for a local Social Enterprise and is very engaged with the local food culture. Like Hilary she likes cooking from scratch using raw ingredients and she has good sourcing skills albeit availability of local food brands near where she lives is limited. She is at the older end of the 35-44 years age range and well educated, having studied at post graduate level.

**Activity:** Preparation of a meal to be consumed with me.

**Acts:** Conversations about local food brands. Included were discussions concerning meal routines with Rebecca and her daughter Janey; Rebecca’s preparation of her ragu (see detail in the observations below). This involved peeling and chopping of vegetables and cooking on the top of the oven. It also involved discussion of the items within her store cupboards.

**Space:** The setting was in Rebecca’s kitchen

**Time:** 03/06/2015

**Observations and Reflections**

I arrived at another terraced house in Heckford Park, just a few doors away from Hilary which was by accident and not design. Again, a pleasant property although this one is rented, and I sensed that Hilary was owner occupier. As such it lacked the same stamp of personality probably because it was presented in a non-descript way which makes it easy

to rent. Her profession and background knowledge about local food is an advantage as she is able to offer some deeper insights and explanations occasionally.

I entered the kitchen which is small and reasonably well laid out although space is restricted. It has not been planned by a cook – which Hilary’s so obviously was. There was no evidence of cooking – Rebecca was clearly going to start from scratch which wasn’t as inviting as Hilary’s where there was evidence of ingredients spilling out onto the work surfaces. This was a kitchen of an assembler rather than a cook which Rebecca more or less admitted, saying that her daughter was the cook. Nonetheless it was an area where conversations flowed to unwrap the day between herself and her daughter.

Whilst Hilary was more fluid with her movements, reaching instinctively for utensils, Rebecca occasionally fought with the cupboards, uneasily extracting items which weren’t located within easy reach unlike Hilary’s. Rebecca was going to prepare “Johnson ragu” (Johnson being her surname) which almost suggested quite a male approach to cooking. There was a suggestion of some unfamiliarity with cooking regularly but a signature dish to be brought out when required. I was invited to stay for the final dish.

Her daughter Janey was enjoying watching TV in her sitting room but engaged politely with the discussion initially before retiring and leaving her mum to the conversation. I sensed I was breaking and interrupting a close mother/daughter routine and felt guilty.

Rebecca’s produced her meal, choosing to boil the courgettes and carrots in the same water, reflecting some economy in preparation. Rebecca’s store cupboard revealed some local food brands such as chutneys that can prove useful in enhancing an assembled dish. In this instance, Rebecca added flavour by tipping in red wine.

Rebecca’s body language was positive, good eye contact and really wanted to be supportive with her answers. However, whilst she was clearly enthusiastic about local food brands, her skills can be further enhanced for preparing food, particularly when contrasted against Hilary.

*Flora (45-54 years), consultancy owner*

**Space:** The setting was the Salt Pig Café in Wareham (<http://www.thesaltpig.co.uk/>); it sells local food brands within an adjacent area to the café section as well as serving them to dining customers.

**Actors:** The researcher and Flora (45-54 years), consultancy owner. The researcher is an actor playing an important role in engaging conversations, information and meanings around local food brands.

Flora is married and has twin pre-teen girls. She lives in Charmouth, situated in west Dorset on the coast. She frequents London as she runs her own communications consultancy. Flora is immersed in the local food scene and I've come across her at the Parnham Food Fayre in nearby Beaminster. Like Hilary, she describes herself as middle class, although there are clear differences in their income levels.

**Activity:** Interview at the Salt Pig café in Wareham;

**Acts:** Ordering lunch chosen from their locally sourced menu; discussion of local food brands with reference to the discussion guide and use of prompts.

**Time:** 09/07/2015

**Observations and reflections**

This interview took place in the Salt Pig café in Wareham which aims to offer local quality food at affordable prices. Flora has a good understanding of local food brands. This was both a help and a slight hindrance as I sensed she was almost anticipating the type of answers she would like me to hear on the odd (but rare) occasion. However, I may have been over-sensitive to this and was conscious of this when analysing the data. It was helpful as she wanted to contribute. Flora does paint a rather rosy picture of an ideal existence by the sea and I was conscious that she may tend to embellish. The recorder refused to work for this interview, so I took notes, which is a little restrictive as it alters the flow of the conversation.

*Freda (55-64 years) civil servant; Marjorie (55-64 years), school matron; Eleanor (55-64 years) retired school matron - Leigh Food Fair*

**Space:** The setting was Leigh Food Fair taking place on north-west Dorset.

**Actors:** The researcher and Freda (55-64 years), civil servant; Marjorie (55-64 years), school matron and Eleanor (55-64 years), retired school matron. The researcher is an actor playing an important role in engaging conversations, information and meanings around local food brands.

**Activity:** An accompanied walk and shop around the food fair discussing the local food brands on offer.

**Acts:** Observing, and occasionally smelling, touching and tasting the local food brands. Discussing what was experienced.

**Time:** 18/07/2015

Freda is single and approaching retirement but still working as a civil servant. She has a second home in Dorset and very middle class with a keen interest in local food brands. She is a connection via my old school. Freda entertains regularly and is conscious of the local food brands she consumes and shares with others. Freda brought with her Marjorie, who is a matron at a local private girls' boarding school and Eleanor who is a retired school matron. Both are on restricted incomes and both are grandparents with extended families; however; both are engaged in local food brand consumption.

### **Observations and Reflections**

This was a lovely day for Leigh Village Food Fayre complete with vintage car display. This was a well-attended event. The venue is not far from Sherborne, so this is west but also north Dorset. The profile of attendees was well-off older middle-class people. The producers were engaging and friendly.

Freda mentioned she had a poor sense of smell but compensated when describing the use of her other senses. There was some useful data collected albeit a little restricted given the ambient noise and it was busy. There was some good input from Marjorie and Eleanor. Eleanor had some access issues to local food brands and farm shops but not so for Marjorie. This was a different setting and occasion and added to the data collected.

*Julie (55-64 years), funeral business administration manager*

**Space:** The setting was at Julie's home at Highcliffe, on the eastern edge of Dorset. It was near to Ferndene farm shop.

**Actors:** The researcher and Julie. The researcher is an actor playing an important role in engaging conversations, information and meanings around local food brands.

Julie lives in Highcliffe, Dorset and she is in her 50s. She is married and has older step children that are around for four days a week. During our conversation it was apparent that she likes to cook food with raw ingredients and has shopping skills which take her regularly to Ferndene Farm Shop which is nearby, together with local supermarkets. Julie is highly engaged with the farm shop and has a positive attitude towards buying local produce.

**Activity:** This was an interview held at Julie's home, It did not include a kitchen visit or exploration of her cupboards, but nonetheless a useful discussion of her purchase and consumption of local food brands.

**Time: 24/07/2015**

**Observations and reflections**

This interview went very well at her home and I was grateful for her time. Julie is a typical consumer of local food brands although her awareness of some Dorset local food brands was a little limited. This became clearer when I visited the Farm shop where they sell mostly their own brand produce, which is still relevant for this study given it is Ferndene branded. Shortly after I visited Ferndene farm shop as she had spoken so highly of it.

**Ferndene Farm Shop Observations (summary of transcript)**

**Space:** The setting was at Ferndene Farm shop, just outside Highcliffe.

**Actors:** The researcher adopting an observation role.

**Time: 24/07/2015**

This was a busy farm shop with a full car park and queues at the till. It had an older broader profile of customer visit which was not unexpected given the high proportion of retired people living in nearby communities. It was reasonably priced, and I had never seen such a busy farm shop. I overheard a couple coming out saying "look at this,

wonderful, and the prices, it's so cheap. There were plenty of fruit and vegetables and a good butchery. There were a few local food brands such as Longman Butter, but it tended to be branded as 'Ferndene Farm Shop' on the packaging such as pumpkin seeds for example.

***Samuel (+65 years) – retired haulage contractor***

**Space:** The setting was Hive Beach café at Burton Bradstock and its mission is to use locally sourced sustainable food (<http://www.hivebeachcafe.co.uk>). It was a conducive environment in which to discuss local food brands.

**Actors:** The researcher and Samuel (+65 years), retired haulage contractor. The researcher is an actor playing an important role in engaging conversations, information and meanings around local food brands.

Samuel is married to Cilla with grown up children. He retired to Burton Bradstock and was a haulage contractor. He has a real interest in local food and local food brands and grows local produce on his allotment. He frequents his local farm shop at Modbury. He enjoys cooking. He is retired and a high user of local produce at home. His reduced income is a barrier to purchase and he goes to some effort with his allotment to control his expenditure. I recruited Samuel through a request placed on the Dorset AONB website (<http://www.dorsetaonb.org.uk/food-and-drink>). I sensed he responded to the request as he saw the opportunity for a good chat and a purpose for his day.

**Activity:** An interview sat outside the Hive Beach café on a gloriously sunny day

**Acts:** Discussing Samuel's engagement with local food and local food brands.

**Time:** 18/08/2015

**Observations and Reflections**

Samuel and I had a good interview. He enjoyed being bought a cup of tea and cake and it was a lovely day. It was a pleasant situation sat outside at the Hive Beach café with a stunning view. There were few people in our vicinity, so it was easy to converse. He had some awareness of local food brands and mentioned some of local traders in Bridport. Samuel made much of his concern with GM (Genetically Modified) foods and this sparked his interest in organic and locally produced food. He occasionally digressed into

mainstream brands and anything else that took his fancy but clearly liked cooking and mentioned several recipes. Afterwards I visited Modbury farm shop, just up the road and a summary of the transcript follows:

***Modbury Farm Shop (summary of transcript)***

**Space:** The setting was Modbury Farm Shop, set in a beautiful tranquil Dorset lane.

**Actors:** The researcher in an observational role.

**Time:** 18/08/2015

This was just up the road from Burton Bradstock in west Dorset down a quiet country lane in an idyllic setting. It had signs saying fresh bread today – Jersey milk and cream. The house is beautiful made from Dorset stone. On entering the shop there was literally no-one there and it was a pay by trust set up. There was a camera in the top corner to assist the trusting set up. I walked around the shop dictating into my recorder which may have been interesting for anyone observing through the camera. It was attractively laid out with an eye for the tourist. It had the usual selection of local food brands as found in Felicity's and Washingpool.

***Beryl (55-64 years), Parish Council leader***

**Space:** The setting was Beryl's home, Broadmayne just outside Dorchester.

**Actors:** The researcher and Beryl (55-64 years), Parish Council leader. The researcher is an actor playing an important role in engaging conversations, information and meanings around local food brands.

Beryl lives with partner in Broadmayne near Dorchester. She runs the Parish Council and is involved in the Ramblers' Association. She has an interest in local food and some local food brands and very keen to support local producers. She visits Poundbury market and a farmers' market in Dorchester for access to local food but also mentioned Craig's Farm Dairy that she visits occasionally. I recruited Beryl through a request placed on the Dorset AONB website (<http://www.dorsetaonb.org.uk/food-and-drink>) and she kindly invited me to her house. Beryl is a high user of local produce at home and makes efforts to subsidise her food shopping from her own supply of eggs for example.

**Activity:** This was an interview held at Beryl's home, It did not include a kitchen visit or exploration of her cupboards, but it was an insightful discussion about her consumption of local food and local food brands.

### **Observations and Reflections**

Beryl is an outlier given some of her attitudes and behaviours demonstrated through our conversations. She openly spoke of her supermarket visits and her reliance upon them but clearly feels aggrieved as to how they are treating their suppliers, for example the dairy farmers. Beryl was keen to focus on this aspect of support for the producer and was on her own when she said (about locally produced cheese)

*“Yeh I don't think it necessarily tastes any better, but it's just- it's good, but not necessarily tasting any better. I mean as I say we don't always buy it, if it's three weeks to go before the next farmers' market, we'll just get whatever's in Tesco's.”*

Beryl would keep returning to her theme of support for the local producers and this was her main issues that she wanted to communicate. She also revealed that her partner did most of the cooking although she made the puddings. I felt there was a limited amount of information I was going to get from Beryl which was slightly frustrating although she clearly had strong feelings about supporting local producers. Hence the interview was a little shorter than usual – which left me slightly frustrated but rationally it was the right thing to bring it to a close as we were beginning to revisit the same topic again and again.

### ***Jilly (45-54 years), Weymouth Councillor***

**Space:** The setting was the Salt Pig Café in Wareham (<http://www.thesaltpig.co.uk/>); it sells local food brands within an adjacent area to the café section as well as serving them to dining customers.

Jilly is married and lives in Weymouth. Whilst she has no children, she has a very good knowledge of local food brands and describes herself as middle class. Jilly says she is lucky with her disposable income and acutely aware that there are others less fortunate for whom buying local food is simply not on the radar. She is a councillor, has run the Citizens Advice Bureau in Weymouth and is a Labour party activist. Jilly was recruited through Flora and is her sister-in-law

**Actors:** The researcher and Jilly (45-54 years), Weymouth Councillor. The researcher is an actor playing an important role in engaging conversations, information and meanings around local food brands.

**Activity:** Interview at the Salt Pig café in Wareham;

**Acts:** Ordering lunch chosen from their locally sourced menu; discussion of local food brands with reference to the discussion guide and use of prompts.

**Time:** 24/08/2015

### **Observations and Reflections**

The interview took place in the Salt Pig Café in Wareham which was slightly busy and occasionally distracting. We had a local food-based lunch. Jilly came across as highly educated with a real in-depth knowledge of local foods. She clearly wanted to chat and viewed this almost like a semi-social occasion, enjoying organising her lunch and getting stuck into a glass of wine. This was a very similar setting and situation as the interview with Flora, with me footing the bill on both occasions. On both occasions it was worth it, Jilly gave a particularly rich account of her experiences and engagement with local food brands. Whilst Jilly offered further suggestions as to people to interview, I may be reaching saturation point as I'm hearing information I've heard before.

### ***Hilary (45-54 years), community facilitator - Accompanied Shopping Trip Wimborne Food fair***

**Space:** The setting was Wimborne Food Fair and we arranged to meet when the fair was just starting so the stalls were plentiful

**Actors:** The researcher and Hilary (45-54 years), community facilitator. The researcher is an actor playing an important role in engaging conversations, information and meanings around local food brands.

This is the second occasion of meeting Hilary and a reminder of her status: she is a high user of local produce at home. She is a single mother with 17-year-old daughter Lily. She makes big efforts to overcome barriers to purchase by exerting greater control over her buying behaviour which was exemplified at the Fair. She manages what income she has and made no secret that she had to be careful with money, although she views herself as

middle class. She lives within the Poole conurbation and is an ex-social worker. Hilary works with people with troubles and issues, and this includes teaching them how to cook and feed themselves so has good understanding of food and local social issues. She manages to access local food brands such as produce from Holten Lee (local community growers) but has limited access to farm shops. She is interested in visiting local food fairs albeit previously has labelled them as 'middle-class' and I sense contrived.

**Activity:** An accompanied walk and shop around the food fair discussing the local food brands on offer.

**Acts:** Observing, and occasionally smelling, touching and tasting the local food brands. Discussing what was experienced.

**Timing:** 24/10/2015

### **Observations and Reflections**

This took place with Hilary in October in 2015. It was a grey drizzly day and we started when the food fair was just finished setting up. The sight of the vegetables was attractive but contrasted with a rather vinegary smell. The age profile was comfortably 55 plus and typical food fair attendees (Mintel 2011). One Hilary arrived we took a leisurely meander around the stalls in Wimborne and it was very easy to establish a rapport because of our previous meeting. Hilary spoke easily to the stall holders and I sensed that her attitude toward them shifted as the recorded conversation will show. This was more of a purposeful conversation (Burgess 1984) than questions and answers. To support this session The Daily Echo kindly gave me access to their photographs of the event.

## **Appendix Seven: Pilot Discussion Guide**

### **Pilot Discussion Guide: Felicity Farm Shop**

Thank respondent for agreeing to help and find out a little about their background.

Explain the participant information sheet and gain their consent using the consent form.

Ask if it is ok to accompany them around the shop.

Typical questions:

How come they have visited here today?

*What are you looking for?*

*For what purpose will it be used?*

*What does local mean to you?*

*How do you engage with local food?*

*What local foods do you use?*

*In what capacity?*

*Probe for meaning (linking to your conceptual framework)- sensory, functional, psychological, subcultural and cultural*

*Any link to the senses? Direct? Multisensory? [RO1]*

*What of the functional? [RO2] As an ingredient? Price? Quality? (functional)*

*Motivation (psychological; self-concept) Any links to memory – reminding of past experiences?*

*Any group references – farmers? (subculture)*

*Any cultural references? behaviour rituals? Stories?*

*(From this you may determine some connections [RO3/4])*

*Probe anything else.*

*Thank respondent*

## **Appendix Eight: Summarised Field Notes from Pilot Venue**

Spradley (1980) suggests that the following dimensions (in bold) should be captured:

**Space:** the physical place which is Felicity's Farm Shop west Dorset on the A35 between Bridport and Charmouth West Dorset. Web address: <http://www.felicityfarmshop.co.uk/index.html>

There is a refrigerated display of milk and dairy and pressed flower juices. Then it moves onto meat and some prepared dishes, and prepared meats that come from local sources e.g. Manor Court Farm Foods; then fresh chickens, fresh beef. Moving on to jams, preserves and honey including Bunnies Love, Wobbly Cottage and Field Honey Farms moving across to Dorset Tea, Wessex flour, a whole selection of dried and tinned and ambient goods. Then there are jars of pasta sauce, some organic sauces, through to rice. There is a lot of Felicity's own brand including long, brown rice and seedless raisins. Mr Filberts nuts and snacks is here, whole foods, moving into Dorset Cereals present. Then Thomas J Fudge, which are biscuits for cheese. Continuing the ambient section there are jars of sauces such as beetroot and horseradish relish, caramelised honey chutney, Liberty Fields Apple Balsamic Vinegar and there is a section on Olives Et Al. but not very big. There is also a section of pottery as moves into non-food goods. Then bread and bakery. Then a frozen selection including peas, roast potatoes and rustic vegetable medley. There is a host of freshly frozen vegetables. Yorkshire puddings and potato gratins. There is Purbeck Ice Cream, then it moves to a very attractive display of onions and shallots, which leads into a selection of vegetables. Dry goods continue with vinegars and then it offers bric-a-brac. There is a fridge with take away sandwiches etc. Then alcohol, including local, real ales and gin, including Dorset Black Cow Vodka with very attractive displays of bottles. The shop then moves into a little gardening section through to the other side.

It is not the most sophisticated environment; however, it seems to capture people's imagination as they walk in. It could be a lot more sophisticated with more up to date retail practices such as barcodes and shelf labelling. However, it meets the criteria of a local food brand farm shop, sourcing local food brands from less than a 30-mile radius, covering Dorset and Devon.

**Actors:** The researcher and selection of customers (details in Appendix four). The researcher is an actor playing an important role in engaging conversations, information and meanings around local food brands.

The selection of customers varies in age including the old and young. People were generally being very helpful, engaging and they wanted to chat. All were really into the local food brands with some of them being very taken and passionate by the whole concept. There are two staff (owners), Felicity and her son Tom, Tom is probably early 30s and his developing his retail skills. He is conscious of the commercial side and suggests that it is an interweaving of the Dorset local foods and the coke and the crisps that sells, particularly in the summer to passing tourist traffic. Felicity is the original owner having set up the shop a few years ago. She is very sociable with her customers. There is also Antonia who has her own local brand of jams, called Bunny's Love and helps out at the shop, but also merchandises her own lines, ensuring they are displayed effectively.

**Activity:** the set of related acts people do. This ranged from browsing to shopping, to discussion items with either their partner or the store staff. Some took the opportunity for a cup of coffee and to take a break as some were driving some distances along the A 35.

**Act:** browsing: comparing and contrasting the selection of brands, noting pricing and sizing. Assessing the ingredients and scrutinising the packaging.

**Act:** shopping: placing the items in the basket and purchasing them using the checkout. Inevitably conversations took place over the checkout with Felicity in particular taking trouble to engage her customers in conversation and enquiring after their well-being.

**Act:** Discussions with accompanying shoppers: for example, the Honeymoon couple were enjoying discussing which local brew to take back as they enjoyed trying out different local selections. Carrie and Samantha were happily discussing meals and what they might indulge themselves with from the selection available. Many shoppers commented on the beauty of the items and the displays.

**Act:** A break from driving to refresh and re-charge the batteries with the single toilet being in frequent use. Planning permission issues prevent the extension of the small café and the take-out facility has been developed accordingly. An outside children's play area encourages customers to take drinks outside and a new shepherd hut has been added in an attempt to overcome the planning restrictions.

**Act:** Merchandising and stocking the shelves, pricing etc. Antonia can come and stock up her Bunny's Love jams and preserves here, unlike many other retailers and there is more flexibility here. There are no barcodes. Everything has to be priced. They have got to

painstakingly check sell by dates which goes back to the old days which perhaps fits with the way that they do things anyway and the culture of the place.

**Act:** Felicity mentions that many customers come in to grab a coffee or a take out yet stop and browse through the farm shop local food brands on display and many may pick up an item and spontaneously purchase.

**Time:** Typical time spent isn't long, possibly around 20 minutes particularly with the event just described. Of the two days spent, the Friday was busier, but the Monday was quieter enabling more time to be spent with respondents.

**Goal:** customers aim to complete their shopping for items they came in for plus one or two spontaneous additions. Alternatively, they may have come in for a coffee and a pit stop.

**Feelings:** Vary amongst respondents and expressed within the individual conversations. An interesting example from observing four women who really were enjoying the experience, they loved touching and feeling the fruit and vegetables. They were going on holiday to Devon together and they were really excited. It's something they do together every year for the last 20 years and this was part of the experience of what they were doing. They loved the theatre of the shop and regarding the experience, they exhibited the sensorial elements: they were very important to them. As I followed them around as they said look at that, feel that.

There were some very interesting comments from people that say: "I hope more places like this stay as they are and don't expand". People are rejecting the supermarkets. Many themes coming across this morning in terms of what local means, supporting the local producers, taste, some links to home-made "like my mother used to" but some interesting positive experiences such as the communication with staff and the friendly atmosphere.

## **Appendix Nine: Learning from Pilot**

On reflection from the visits to Felicity's I realised that that the approach needed to be evolved for the accompanied shopping element. Originally what I wanted to do was to accompany people as they went around, but this did not work out. Respondents wanted to stop and chat so we had a conversation in the aisle and I went with that flow. The respondents had limited time and whilst they were cooperative, I felt as if I was intruding on their time. The first person that I approached walked away because he saw paper, and possibly perceived an official market researcher and he didn't want to know. So, I needed to be mindful of this and engage respondents in conversation before they saw the paperwork. It would yield much richer data if I could recruit respondents in advance and manage their expectations as to what I was after. There is an advantage to recruiting in advance and then the admin is not a barrier.

The pilot was helping me refine the accompanied shopping element and I had more confidence that the kitchen visits and interviews may be a little more straightforward albeit I was aware I should also pilot or learn from the first couple of occasions from these activities. The observational element was challenging too and difficult to simultaneously capture any body language or facial expressions as I was talking to my respondents. It was difficult on reflection to get a fully accompanied shopping trip and simultaneously observe, because people want to stand and talk to you. Even if you invite them to say: "let's look at this" or "what are you going to have a look at next?" you have taken them out of their shopping mentality as they are into talking to you. So, it was more of a chat in situ and I made notes considering the observation angle of it and I found the best way was to verbally record a reflective piece after any interaction.

The participant observation included capturing that it is not the most sophisticated environment, but it seems to capture people's imagination as they walk in. It could be a lot more sophisticated such as engaging with techniques such as wafting the smell of a bakery products when you walk in, as supermarkets do.

Further reflections included considering my particular stance and interest – or bias. I am interested in the functionality and sensorial aspects and I am getting plenty of appropriate data. I was conscious that I need to further probe to unravel the feelings and any associations and there were some emotional responses, including feelings for preserving the farm culture. But some were very matter of fact: I remember asking someone 'when you are about to eat Tom's locally reared lamb do you think of Felicity's farm shop? They

answered that they just get on with eating them. Whilst I have made some attempts to explore the emotional and symbolic, I expect that the in-depth interviews will be useful, however this is a really good starting point.

In comparison I took a trip to nearby Washingpool Farm shop as it was useful to contrast against Felicity's because some might argue it is superior in regard to location and offer. On entry there is a very eye-catching display of fruit and veg with the shallot display and the onions albeit from Brittany. There are gaps, in comparison to Felicity's, no pork pies, or takeaway rolls, however they did not have the same extent of passing trade as Felicity's. Nonetheless, their branded range of pies was not as good and well-labelled as well as Felicity's. The shop was less busy; however, the car park and café were busy. The café is a real pull and distinctive to Washingpool together with its caravan site, small-holding growing vegetables and free-range hens.

This is a tourist destination and not a passing farm shop such as Felicity's, but the depth of range particularly in the fresh meat, the freshly produced pies and baked goods was not as good. The cakes were quite reasonable but, in my view, Felicity's does hold its own and a perfectly good place as to conduct my initial pilot and have conversations with respondents.

I had reached the stage within Felicity's where I was hearing the same things, so it was time to move on. A next step is to invite participants that are primed and are happy to come and shop and chat at the same time. I have got some data, it is useful data, but I am trying to get a bit more of a flow or an involved conversation. It may be good to visit both Felicity's and Washingpool to compare and contrast. I am really looking also to having either a kitchen visit or an in-depth interview and I am thinking about people I can recruit. I will use my contacts Bournemouth and Poole Sustainable City Partnership.

A good initial experience.

## **Appendix Ten: Reflexivity Statement**

Reflexivity is defined by Bryman (2004) as a term referring to “*the reflectiveness amongst social researchers about the implications for the knowledge of the social world they generate of their methods, values biases, decisions and mere presence in the very situations they investigate*” (p.543). This means that the researcher should be sensitive to their cultural, political and social context.

I have seriously considered my role in this research process and aim to be a considered reflexive researcher. I understand the importance of self-reflection and its importance in providing effective and impartial analysis. I am aware that I am not a detached, objective observer but interpret the world through my understanding to comprehend brand meaning within the local food category and this involves overtly acknowledging any assumptions and preconceptions I bring to the research. I know I hold some opinions and ideas, based on my previous experiences.

To critically reflect on my research, it is important to consider the context for my research and my initial curiosity behind my research aim. It is useful to explore how my personal history has led to my interest in this topic. My Masters Dissertation explored the functional and emotional brand values within an fmcg environment and previous consultancy work involved advising a local food fair over in west Dorset. I have taught branding units and have always been curious about brand models and frameworks that seek to explain meaning and their potential challenges. I know I am already critical about some brand models and approaches to brand meaning but this is evidenced by considered academic debate and therefore arguably not too subjective.

My personal value systems include a belief in sustainability and the importance of short supply chains, ensuring that local food is available as widely as possible and not just available to those that can afford it. My gender / social class / ethnicity / culture may influence my perspective in relation to this topic and my informants. I am an older white middle-class woman and as such probably fit within the sample frame albeit I am more questioning and curious about local food provenance and wider socio-economic and sustainability issues. I enjoy shopping for and cooking with local food brands.

## **Appendix 11: Discussion Guide for accompanied shopping trips, kitchen visits and interviews**

*To work alongside photographic prompts - see examples in appendix 12.*

Thank respondent for attendance and find out a little about their background. Work in the participant information sheet and consent form.

*Potential questions and requests: (sequence relatively unimportant)*

Tell me a little about what you do.

What does local mean to you? *[reference to local definition]*

How do you engage with local food?

What local foods do you use?

In what capacity?

What local brands can you recall? *[to ascertain levels of engagement]* Prompt sheet.

Then select two/three local brands and probe...or work this into any brand that they spontaneously mention.

Potential questions (dependent on the opportunity/appropriateness):

Can you recall how that brand (or its characteristic) looks, smells, tastes, feels or even sounds to you? *[Tangible: accessible through the senses: Hirschman 1980]* [RO1]

Or is there more than one sense that is involved here and what is this maybe conjuring up? *[multi-sensory Holbrook and Hirschman 1982; Hultén 2011; possibly leading to personal and past experiences Barnett 1953; self- concept Dittmar 1992]* [RO1]

How does this link to memory? What might you recall? [RO3]

So, by picking up this brand – what connections are going on – does it remind you of anything? *[multi-sensory Holbrook and Hirschman 1982; Hultén 2011; possibly leading to personal and past experiences; self- concept Dittmar 1992]* [RO3]

Does it link to a past memory? Does it take you back to something? Do you think this is a personal recollection? *[memory; Braun-La-Tour et al. 2007; past experiences Barnett 1953; Franzen and Bowman 2001]* Probe [RO3/4]

What will you use it for? [*Functionality e.g. Franzen and Bowman 2001; Levy 1959; Bardhi et al. 2012; use value Marx 1930*] [RO2]

Will be an ingredient for something? [*Sewall 1978*] [RO2]

How does it make you feel? [*Dacin and Brown 2002; Rodrigues et al. 2011; Holbrook and Hirschman 1982*] [RO3]

Does it in some way say something about the type of person that you are? [*Self-concept Dittmar 1992*] [RO3/4]

How did you hear about it? Has anyone recommended it? Have you shared it with anyone else? [*Social integration Escalas and Bettman 2005; Community Brown et al. 1993; Muniz and O'Guinn 2001*] [RO3/4]

Probe – what might it symbolise? [*e.g. Levy 1959; Lannon 1991; Braun-La-Tour et al. 2007*] [RO3/4]

Does it represent anything? [*e.g. Levy 1959; Lannon 1991; Braun-La-Tour et al. 2007*] [RO3/4]

Might you consider it as a gift? [*Larson and Watson 2001*] [RO3/4]

How does it fit in with what you normally do – is this part of a regular process? Do you use it to prepare something in a particular way? [*ritual Woodward 2011; Lannon 199*] [RO3/4]

Will it go to create anything significant – such as ingredient for a wedding cake [*artifacts Miller 1987*], [RO3/4]

Has this been something that has originated from a traditional way of doing things or been handed down? [*heritage Harrison 2013; Eckhardt and Houston 2002;*] [RO3/4]

Does it have story linked to it? [*Brown et al. 2003; Sole and Gray Wilson 1999*] [RO3/4]

Is there anything here that has particular meaning for you? Is there anything else you would like to add?

Thank respondent

NB be mindful you'll need to determine any hierarchy within the data analysis.

**Appendix 12: Examples of prompt photographs of local food brands**











## Appendix 13: Member checked scripts

Interview with **Jilly**

Transcribed Interview – File: 150824\_001, Date: 24 August 2015

Code: J: (Jill speaking), I: (Interviewee speaking)

J: [00:59] I think today's date is-

I: The 24th.

J: You're ahead of me.

I: I've been at work all morning [laughs]. I've already written it about 20 times.

J: You had a busy morning?

I: Yeh, I never don't have a busy morning.

J: Again, Flora did say that you're busy, so I do appreciate you taking this time.

I: That's okay. Well I get an unpaid day every month to do things that are supposed to be to do with the council. So I've just sort of stretched that a bit [background chat].

J: What have you got?

I: I've got pork belly cooked in cider, with mash and beans.

J: So it looks like that is possibly local, given where we are

I: Yes I would hope so, yeh yeh yeh. Lots of pictures of pigs up there. I'm gonna run to the loo before we start. Hopefully that will stay warm while I'm gone. 'Shan't be long.

J: Jilly is a councillor from Weymouth and seems to fit the profile and fit the sample very well. [returns, gets tap water] Jilly's having pork belly with mash and beans and I've got salmon terrine with roasted red peppers and no doubt it has... (local food) credentials.

J: So first of all, I'm doing a PhD. It's very much about local foods and local food brands. So I'm really gonna be asking you, well let's start off, I mean what does local, in terms of local food brands, mean to you?

I: I think Dorset is absolutely replete with local food brands. Interestingly, you go to quite a few food markets around Dorset and you see all the same producers. I actually went to a food market with the father of my goddaughter a couple weeks ago in Hampshire. Only

just over the border and the brands were completely different and it was really weird. Because I hadn't quite realised that line would make such a difference as to who turned up where and what - very strange to see that lack of crossover. So I think Dorset's got a really strong identity in terms of food brands, particularly for people who actually show a bit of interest in it. I suppose the first one I became aware of probably was the eponymous Dorset Cereals, largely because it's called Dorset and I think we probably all became aware of that very quickly. Obviously on the back of that there are other brands that have gone very national - things like Olives Et All things like that. Obviously Denhay for bacon and cheese and also Black Cow Vodka, which seems to have taken on a bit more of a national stance. I think it's difficult to tell, because you see all these brands in Dorset and you don't know which ones have gone national till you move further afield, or you see advertising for them, and you certainly see some of them like Dorset Cereals in supermarkets in San Francisco and so that's definitely gone global[laughter]! People who didn't even know Dorset was a place they thought it was the name of a cereal manufacturer.

J: How would you define local then?

I: I think it depends on what it is you're buying doesn't it. There are some things that obviously you can source more locally than others. You know if you're buying something like bread then local's got a much more narrow margin because that's likely to be much closer to where you live, whereas if what you're looking at fish it's got to come from somewhere where there is sea or a river. It's not going to be from quite such local provenance. That's why I thought it was slightly weird with the boundary line between Dorset and Hampshire making such a difference because actually if you live on one side of the county close to the other you are actually much closer to that side of the other county than your own. If you live in Bridport you're much closer to Axminster than you are to Poole so actually we shouldn't probably be looking at these lines, we should be looking at radiuses or circles of distance. [05:54]

J: When you mentioned that I was curious because I know exactly what you mean in terms of boundaries to Hampshire [I: it's really odd!]. But what about the boundary between Dorset and Devon? How does that seem to you, does it seem such an obvious boundary?

I: Yes I think it does. I have an interesting story about that. I know the guy who has recently set up the Jurassic Water Company and he calls it and he's had real problems with it because he actually sources his water just over the boundary near Axminster, so it's Jurassic but it's not in Dorset. He was very keen for Breakfast in Dorset in the radius area to promote it but of course he couldn't because it's not from Dorset it's from Devon.

J: How interesting, what a dilemma for him.

I: It's blooming annoying because everywhere it's sold is pretty much in Dorset and yet he can't... [6-45].

J: So from that what do you think of Dorset's perception?

I: I think it has a stronger particular link to particular brands. And I think it is broader... [7:04]. I get my veg box every week from Goldhill Organic in Child Okeford. You may want to talk to Jane their proprietor at some stage because obviously she's got huge amounts of interest in this. We talk a lot about food and stuff and when I buy my fish I try to get it from Chesil Smokery and try to get my meat from somewhere like Sam's Pigs or something like that, although I've recently started going to Brace of Butchers in Poundbury because they source their meat locally as well. I find that quite a good place to go. And then you buy other stuff locally don't you, from flowers and stuff like that. I don't buy my wine locally though, [laughter] well I buy it locally, but it doesn't come from local. I quite like the stuff they make in Sherbourne but it's so expensive.

J: Yes, it does get a bit pricey doesn't it? So, you've told me in terms of local veg box, you've told me about where you source your butchery from.

I: Obviously there's loads and loads of local cheese, things like Blue Vinny and Godminster Cheddar and stuff like that. I tend to buy Godminster Cheddar as presents because it comes with their nice waxy packaging, so it travels really well, especially the little heart shaped ones. I send them to America.

J: So, you've just spontaneously told me about an awful lot of brands which is really, really useful. Any others before I start pulling out, sort of pictures?

I: Well I suppose there's the local producers like the local cake producers, like Rolly's Brownies which is just round the corner from me. The woman who makes the cakes she calls herself Lizzie Baking Bird and they just live in ... [8:54] and I try and get stuff from there if I can. Actually, the brownies are probably the best brownies I've ever eaten in my

life. I suppose we sort of think of Riverford as Dorset even though it's in Devon still. It started off in Dorset so you think about it as being there. No, I don't mean Riverford, it's River Cottage but it comes out of Riverford.

J: Okay so I'm just going to try and identify any brands you haven't told me about here.

I: Yeh, I've probably heard of them, it's probably just that my brain's going dead. There's the lovely tea people in Sturminster Newton, who's name I can't remember, Dorset Tea isn't local at all. It comes from all over the place.

J: Clipper Tea or Dorset Tea?

I: No no, Dorset Tea is the one out in Beaminster isn't it? Comins Tea House in Sturminster Newton, have you heard of it, it's great.

J: No I haven't.

I: It's fantastic, it's like a Japanese tea house so it's great. They're real tea obsessives, but we're not talking breakfast tea here we're talking all kinds of tea.

J: It's interesting actually because we've just named about 3 different tea producers.

I: Yes, and you said Clipper tea and I suddenly thought of Liberty Fields [laughs] [10:10] as well, I'd forgotten about them. And obviously From Dorset With Love – I've got bloody loads of their vinegar.

J: So why is it we accept that tea is local?

I: Well I don't think we do. I think we accept that it's a local business selling a product that is not local, so you sort of support it because it's a local business. It's not just that they sell their tea - they've also got a little cafe and all the rest of it. How they keep going in a place like Sturminster Newton is beyond me but there you go. I think...[10:40] that's the difference between a local product and a local business isn't it, and they are not necessarily the same.

J: I'll try and unpack that later.

I: Okay what would you like me to do?

J: I'd like you to see if there's any other brands that, amongst all this that you've heard of?

I: Oh yeh, Filberts Rapeseed Oil, yeh I've got some of that in my cupboard actually.

J: Just that I'm literally just piling a whole load of stuff.

I: Oh yes, Purbeck Ice Cream. I really love their Chili one.

J: Have you heard of Barford, Barford ice cream?

I: Yes, I haven't eaten it I don't think though.

J: They used to distribute to a lot of the restaurants over in Christchurch, but they stopped because it was costing them too much. Now they've just got the ice cream farm near Wimborne. So, what's your neck of the woods in terms of where you live?

I: I live in Weymouth. I think the first time I ever saw Purbeck ice cream was at the little shack on the beach at Studland.

J: I know where you mean.

I: Obviously now they're a bigger distributor and you see them occasionally. They used to sell in the cinema in Dorchester as well. The last time I saw it was at Bridport Beer Festival back in the summer, they have their stand there obviously. These ones here?

J: Yeh they're a bit small, sorry.

I: Chesil Smokery we've mentioned already. Capriolas. Dorset Cereals we've mentioned. Oh yes, Dorset Nectar. I've bought some of that for some friends in Lincolnshire. And Black Cow. Dorset Coffee Company? I don't know anything about Dorset Coffee Company. Although I don't drink coffee so it wouldn't- Dorset Tea we've talked about. Well I should have mentioned Craig Farms Dairy because they used to deliver to us [laughter]. Bridfish Smokery. I've never really used, partly because we've used Chesil I think. I don't recognise them at all. Obviously, they're farmers, I wasn't even thinking of them as being a local brand, but obviously they are. But if we're talking about breweries then obviously we've got all those other local breweries like Piddle and stacks of other things aren't there really.

J: I'm impressed by the repertoire. I think we've mentioned some of these.

I: Clipper's the one that's at Beaminster. Godminster I mentioned, Liberty Fields we mentioned... then I don't know who they are. Chococo I do know but I'm trying to keep myself from shopping for chocolate. They're in Swanage aren't they and they have a shop in the factory. They sell their stuff around and there is a delicatessen called Simon in Dorchester, so I've bought some boxes from him, chocolates as presents and stuff.

J: So we've talked about local and we got lots of examples of local food brands. Just, probably a fairly obvious question, but what does brand mean to you?

I: Well I suppose it's about producing your product under an identifiable label and getting people to recognise it, so that they are buying on the label as well as the product. But I don't know I'm not a marketing person.

J: No but it's just good to sort of unpack what it means to you, and your understanding, so that's helpful. So, we looked at local, we've looked at local food brands. Often local food brands because you've named so many, so I'm just trying to think about picking up on just a few of them, or even one or two. First of all, I'm trying to unpack their meaning in different ways, and if you were to think about any brand you particularly like from a sensorial aspect, from a taste or a touch or a smell, is there anything that particularly stands out to you about any particular brand with its sensory elements?

I: Well there's two things then. I particularly used to like Olives Et Al because I really love the way it's packaged. And I particularly liked the things where they sold the big jars of oil and you used to buy the refills for them. Actually they rebranded quite recently and I don't like the new brand as much as the old one.

J: Why's that?

I: It looks a bit more international and little bit less rustic and I quite liked the way it looked before. I think they've gone much more mainstream and I just preferred it how it was, that's just me I suppose and I was like oh I don't really like this.

J: So, it might be a bit obvious but what's wrong with mainstream?

I: I don't know. I think it's something to do with the colour scheme actually. But I don't know, I can't be any more specific than that. I just know that when they rebranded recently I thought I don't like that as much as I did previously.

J: So, the sight, the colours, all those things just didn't resonate with you that had done before?

I: Not so much no.

J: It didn't say local as much.

I: I think it's exactly what it was, I think it had lost its local thing going on.

J: OK. What other brands come to mind in terms of sensorial aspect? So, is it a sight, smell, touch, taste?

I: Well Chesil Smokery. I particularly adore their smoked salmon and that's nothing to do with what it looks like it. It looks quite nice. I like the way it's packaged, I like the label. They have a really nice sort of like green beigey label which looks really sophisticated and I really like that. It looks like a cross between sophisticated and yet recycled and that's a good link. But actually I wouldn't really care what the label looks like because I really like the fish, so it wouldn't bother me at all.

J: So, tell me about the fish and tell me about when you eat the fish what's going on there?

I: Well I particularly like oily fish. I particularly like smoked salmon. I think their fish is really well done, it seems to be very luscious. I don't like buying little packets of fish like this. When you buy theirs you can buy a big packet and cut it off into the exact kind of sizes you really want. That suits me really well because you can use it for different things. And I think it's really good value for money, and it's not nasty and dry like the stuff you buy in the supermarket.

J: What sort of different things do you use it for?

I: Salmon? Well just as it is generally.

J: I was thinking about recipes and things you might use it for-

I: Well I think it's such a really nice ingredient that actually I don't want to use it with too much stuff because it stands out on its own. So generally we just eat it on its own with crackers or something, or with scrambled eggs, or possibly in a salad, but I wouldn't want to cover it in any sauce or anything because it's really nice. I mean you'd wreck it otherwise.

J: So just going back to when you taste that particular salmon, does it taste different from other salmon?

I: Well I think it's a combination of being able to buy it in a large size which is handy, and you can never do that in a supermarket. I think it's true of some meats as well that some fish you buy just look like they have been preserved. Certainly, this is true of meat. My dad was a butcher so I'm a bit funny about meat. So when you go to shops you can see the meat has red colouring in it to make it look fresh and that's just a no-no for me completely. And I just find the whole concept of meat that's come from miles away just

makes me feel ill, so I think the whole combination of that, the ability to choose what you want, the fact that it is quite good value for money when you buy it like that is helpful.

J: Yep.

I: And you can just choose how you want to eat it, and I just like that.

J: What about any other brands you'd buy from the sensorial point of view? Anything that grabs you in terms of smell, taste, or is it a combination of the senses that's going on in terms of look or feel?

I: I think part of why I like buying local stuff is because it's local, and I really believe in supporting local industry in terms of local farming, and local stuff like that, so I really believe in supporting local vegetable growers and all this kind of stuff. And also local small businesses, so even places that have got like tea, that isn't- I am a bit of a mug for packaging so if it looks really nice as well that's great. I really like the Comins Tea House teas because I think they look really nice, they're really well packaged [19:46] I'd be quite happy to have them in my kitchen and to give them as gifts, so that's quite a handy thing. I think this whole concept of 'Dorset tea' is, we need to not get carried away with that. I used to share a room at college with a girl who was obsessed with Yorkshire Tea, and I thought that was stupid, so you just have to recognise that it's a local company trying to do their best, and that's a good thing to support. But there comes a point, doesn't there, where these things go beyond localness to nationalness, and that's why I don't get Riverford veg box any more because when they first came out I used to get Riverford veg box, but when I went to a Riverford distribution point and I saw what a massive, massive distribution system they had there I just thought, well actually you know, they don't need any support, they're a massive national organisation, let's find somewhere more local. Then we had one man who had a heart attack and had to give up, and another family who moved to France, so I was quite pleased to find one who was actually going to stay put for a while. It's quite a challenge sometimes, because obviously when you're dealing with a national organisation, they've got that benefit that if something is not in they've got something to replace it, whereas when you're using someone more local there are months of famine as well.

J: There are more risks.

I: You have to get used to a lot of turnips if you're not careful [laughs]. You've got to be quite patient, I think, as well.

J: Obviously you are taking some risks there, you're not getting the continuity.

I: Yes, but then that's quite fun isn't it? I find that quite fun. If I just wanted to have the same thing all the time then I'd just have a mechanised list for Asda, and just say send me the same thing every week. So, I wouldn't find that very interesting. I mean I just quite like the fact that my veg box turns up every week and I never know what's going to be in it. And I have to think about 'gosh what am I going to do with these things, and how am I going to plan my menu about it, and not go shopping until the day after the veg boxes has come so that I can plan around that and occasionally go "what on earth is this thing?" and have a quick look at the website to find out what it is because I don't know. It hasn't happened very often, but it does happen sometimes. She sent me some turmeric root once she'd been experimenting with and I did have to have a look it and go 'what exactly is that'.

J: So, you're pretty involved with this veg box; it's taking a lot of planning, it's taking a lot of thought?

I: Well I think you have to, don't you? If you get something like that, like a weekly delivery, and you don't sequence your shopping around it you're never going to make best use out of it.

J: Lots of things we've touched on there, and hopefully I'm going to remember to pick up on everything. The veg box in terms of its uses and also why does the veg box vary so much?

I: It's the seasonality, isn't it? If you were to buy a veg box that's not seasonal then I don't know what the point is, you might as well go to Sainsbury's, which would probably be cheaper, and you could buy exactly how much you want. So, if you're not having seasonality then there's no point.

J: So why is that so important to you?

I: Because that's where we are moving away from a globalised culture to a more local culture. I grew up in the 70's and 80's, and we were moving in the other direction towards a much more international globalised way of eating, and things being much more farmed and standardised. At the same time my parents had an allotment where my mum grew very seasonal veg- we all had very seasonal veg all the way through the year. The only things we were ever allowed to buy from the vegetable shop down the road was oranges

and bananas because we didn't grow them. Everything else you just had to have when it came. So we were very used to massive gluts of raspberries and going “ oh my god not raspberries again!” - and massive gluts of turnip and Brussels sprouts in the winter. You just wanted to hide your head because they were so appalling.

J: Did you always have to eat them in the same way?

I: It was a bit over boiled frankly.

J: I think that happened at that time.

I: To kill the nasty bugs or whatever they were, you know, put it on, boil it for half an hour, it'll be fine. I don't cook things in the same way as my mum did at all. But you know I think we got very used to having stuff that had dirt on in the fridge. So you had that at home, with my dad being a butcher, so everyone goes ‘oh you must have had the best meat’. That wasn't true at all, we used to get what was left at the end of the day, to the extent that one Christmas we didn't have a turkey because somebody came into the shop on Christmas Eve and said ‘oh my god I haven't got a turkey’, so my dad sold ours and we had sausages [both laugh]. My mum wasn't very impressed, as you can imagine.

J: So, you mentioned a minute ago local culture and the local culture being really important to you. You also talked about supporting the local businesses. Why is that important to you?

I: Well, because otherwise we're going to end up importing everything from China. I mean I can tell the difference. When I went to the local butcher for the first time, I was really impressed that they knew where all their meat came from. I can remember going to my dad's shop in the 70's and it was New Zealand lamb, and everything, all the lamb all came from New Zealand. There was no such as local lamb and we weren't supporting local industry, and that's meant people going out of work. I just think that's really unacceptable frankly. Unless you really can't afford to buy in any other way then frankly we owe it to ourselves as a nation to try and support our local producers. I am very obsessive about this. I won't use self-service checkouts because I think they're a way of putting people out of work. So I will stand in the queue in W H Smith or Asda, or Sainsbury's or anywhere, for half an hour rather than use the self-service checkout. People go “you can use the self-service checkout”, but I say I'm not doing that because I'm keeping your job. They must think I'm a complete lunatic. But it's a way of putting people out of work, and I think it's unacceptable.

J: That's fully understandable.

I: We have to try and support local producers and local businesses. Some people are completely obsessed by it and won't buy anything that hasn't been produced locally, but I think that's just ridiculous. You need to be able to live. But also you need to be thinking about how these things work together, and if you are constantly buying New Zealand apples because they're 2p cheaper than the English ones, you need to be thinking about the long-term impact on our national economy, and I think that's really appalling. So I try to buy as local as I can, and try to buy British if I can't, and if none of this stuff works then I take another look. I really object to, when there are plenty of good green beans being grown in this country at this time of the year and in the supermarket they are from Peru. Why would I buy them from Peru when I can get them from down the road? Seems nonsense.

J: If you can't get local and if you can't get British?

I: Then I'll go for European before I go for South American, and that's to do with air miles as much as anything else, because I know that the stuff that comes from the continent comes on the back of a lorry, and whilst that's not great it's much better than flying it in.

J: What about Fair-Trade?

I: I do but I'm not obsessed by it because there's that dichotomy between Fair Trade and air miles travelled. Because it's very difficult to buy Fair Trade that hasn't been flown internationally. If I'm buying a product where there is no alternative locally, and the option is Fair-Trade or not Fair-Trade then I will look at the Fair-Trade product and contemplate buying it, but frankly we're talking chocolate here aren't we, which I try not to buy if I can [laughs].

J: So how long have you been behaving like this? Is it something that's been with you a long time?

I: I don't know. The underlying principle has been with me all my life, but as an active consumer, probably since I moved to Dorset. Because before that I lived in London and buying local wasn't quite the same.

J: When did you move to Dorset?

I: 1999. As I say when I was growing up we had very much local veg because it came out of the garden. We had a massive allotment. And that was coupled with the bizarreness of

living through that era of crispy fried pancakes and cod in batter and everything in a can, so it was a very weird combination of local vegetables from the garden and pretty local meat from the shop and these really weird Vesta fried rice and Findus. I won't even look at it now. I can't believe we were forced to eat it and quite surprised we didn't die of malnutrition [laughs].

J: So, there are obviously influences from when you were brought up, in terms of the local veg and your dad's butcher, but did your dad have much local meat or was an awful lot of it-

I: I have no idea, I suspect not, because I suspect it all came from a wholesaler. I don't think there was so much pressure to do that in those days. I don't think it was even really an issue. I certainly don't remember it being an issue. I don't remember that being a factor at all. Certainly, when I went to college I don't remember that being a factor, though I did help run a FairTrade stand. I went to college in Durham and I think it was the first Fair Trade shop that wasn't in a shop in England. And then I lived abroad a bit so that wouldn't even have been relevant. And then I lived in London and like, local in London is like either it's from London or it's not really. It's only when I moved here that I began to think about how that worked, surrounded by agriculture, farmers and people trying to make do.

J: So, there's an ethical...

I: Sort of a pioneering spirit as well as the ethical spirit. Definitely there is very much an ethical dimension to it.

J: [Gets coffee] [30:15] To recap, I just want to go back the other way. Can I go back to any other brands? We've skirted around the sensorial aspect, and you told me that what's important is the support of the local producers.

I: I wouldn't buy a rubbish product just to support a local producer. It would have to be acceptable [laughs].

J: Can you think of an ingredient for anything? Do you use local things for ingredients, particularly using them because of what they add to a recipe?

I: I think it's about comparison isn't it? I mean I wouldn't buy anything that I didn't think did its job well. I really like olives from Olives Et Al. They do a really good flavour range, I really like the pots. I really like the fact they come in Kilner jars because then I reuse the Kilner Jars. I particularly like the Kilner jars because I make a lot of chutney, so I just

reuse them and put my chutney in them. Otherwise I'd have to go and buy the Kilner jars and that would be rubbish. If things come in a jar I'd only really buy them in a jar when I know I could re-use the jar. [laughs] I'm a bit funny about that.

J: No because that fits with your ethical side, re-use, etc.

I: Oh yes. So if I can reuse the jar then I tend to buy things that are a good size, and the lid fits well [laughs], but I like that. So, if the product itself if didn't do the job. If the Chesil Smokery fish was a bit dry I wouldn't buy it. But it's not, so it's great. And if the Godminster cheddar was unpleasant, or too mild, then I wouldn't buy that either, but it's fine. So, you've got the combination of it's a really good product, plus I quite like the way it looks, plus these things are all good combinations, aren't they?

J: What constitutes- Godminster cheddar in terms of its taste and strength?

I: It's my husband who really likes this. He's the cheese taster. He really likes the Godminster cheddar. I think it's a combination of creamy and flavoursome. Apparently, lots of cheeses that are creamy are very mild, and lots of tastier ones are not so creamy. Somehow, they manage to combine both.

J: That's an interesting perception in terms of those particular concepts.

I: He and his dad both like the Blue Vinny.

J: Why do they like that?

I: They like blue cheese. My father-in-law is Flora's father in law as well. He's very Lancashire and he came to dinner a couple of weeks ago.

J: What part of Lancashire?

I: Oldham.

J: I was born in Oldham.

I: Poor you [laughs].

J: Long time ago, moved out when I was 3.

I: Yeh they're all from Oldham and they came to dinner the weekend before last. We don't see them very often, they certainly don't come to our house very often. And I'd fuffed about cooking dinner and we made- I got some 'padrón peppers from the Brace of Butchers, obviously North Spain, not local, but there you go. I grew them last year, and

we had a really good lot. This year there was too much rain, they were hopeless. Anyway, we did all this, bought the food and everything and eventually I bought some Blue Vinny because I know he likes it. I said would you like some cheese, and he said 'Oo no, I think I've eaten enough' and I said 'oh okay'. Mike said "we've got some blue Vinny" so he said "oh well I don't mind if I do" [laughter]. They like blue cheese and it's got some history attached to it. And you know it's been made locally and they don't make it anywhere else.

J: You said that you buy gifts, things for gifts, particularly...?

I: Oh yes, I buy a lot of things for gifts. Nearly every year all the various members of our family get an Olives Et Al gift box for Christmas. It's for a combination of reasons, one of which is they post them out and they do a really good job. They turn up ready for Christmas in a nice box with a ribbon around it, and I know the product's going to be really nice, and they get a nice box so that's always quite handy. My father-in-law quite often gets a pot of Blue Vinny [shuffles tea] and some greengage jam which we find on the market stall somewhere because he particularly likes greengage jam.

J: You're giving me a lot of food presents.

I: I am. I have cousins in the States. My cousin in the States runs a microbrewery in Sacramento, so he is particularly interested in small brew beer, so every time we go we take half a dozen bottles of beer from a different brewery he hasn't tried, so he can try them. On a plane, it's OK because it's about the size of two shoe boxes, so I get two pairs of shoes on the way back because there's space in the suitcase. We met them in Lyon, France quite recently for a week, doing the same thing as I'm doing now. We took a load of beer out with us so he could taste it. You can't send it over. He always wants to see what's new and what's local, so we've taken Piddle out to him and we've taken Weatherspoon's beers and we've taken a variety of different ciders, like Dorset Nectar and all those things, just because it's stuff they can't get.

J: And also he's obviously got an interest in that.

I: Oh, he's got an interest, and he always takes one back to the brewery and gives it to the brewer.

J: Why is local food such a nice gift?

I: I think it's partly because we are at that age where we don't want things anymore. And we're at a socio-economic level where we don't need other people to buy us things, because we buy our own things. So actually, when we get a gift or give a gift it's got to be a treat or something like that [37:00], and also, I certainly don't want things which clutter my house even more than it is already thank you.

J: Is it saying anything about where you live?

I: Very much so, it's very much saying "this is where we live and this is the kind of thing you get". My sister in law sent me a box from Carluccio's the other day - it didn't tell me anything. It told me she'd been to Carluccio's [laughter], which is nice, but she's like that. It "told" me she 'd been to Carluccio's, and that she likes going to shops and buying stuff, whereas I send stuff from Dorset and that tells people something different.

J: Thank you. You said you went to France recently.

I: Yeh I went to Lyon.

J: How do we compare with what they do with local food over there?

I: Oh god, I'm just so jealous. It's just so unbearable isn't it?

J: I've just come back from Brittany, so...

I: French markets is an interesting thing isn't it. You look back at what was happening in the 70's when - France is a completely different country from Britain, it's got so much regional diversity in terms of its geography and its climate. Also, the regions themselves are so separate geographically and in terms of transport that until say the 1950's nothing would really go out of a particular region. That was the reason that Brittany Ferries started up, to bring artichokes and stuff to Britain because it was easier to ship them over the channel than it was to get them to the rest of France because the road network was so rubbish. So, if you look at France historically they developed very specific food traditions in different areas just because their road network was so non-existent, until after the war really. So, I think that when they finally became more of an interconnected nation in the 1950's and they started to get not markets but supermarkets, you can see the legislators coming in saying actually we need to protect local producers. That's when they started relaxing the laws on what could be sold in the markets. So instead of saying the stuff that could be sold could only be sold by the local producers, they start saying actually it could be sold by a small village selling stuff from the village, or you can have resellers as long

as they come from within a particular area. I think they recognised that the small producers couldn't both produce the stuff and build the market all the time, so they had to make it a bit more of a viable thing in order to challenge the supermarket provision. It's true for somewhere like Lyon, which I know has a massively good reputation, but it is true everywhere. I lived in Nice for a while and it was the same in Nice. They very much value the stuff they get from the terroir. We don't even have a word for terroir and I don't know why. I think it's because we've lost the value in that. We really need to have a word.

J: So there's one thing in terms of what we could bring across here. Is there anything else you'd like to see that we could borrow from the French?

I: Oh my god, well I particularly love the way they don't seem to be as obsessed as we are with uniformity. Even in their supermarkets they're not as obsessed with uniformity. For example, tomatoes - when we buy a tomato they're all completely round - there are either big round and small round or slightly bigger round, unless they are plumb in which case they're called plum. And that's it, so basically you've got about six types. Whereas in French supermarkets you've got big things and these smaller things and slightly damaged things. They don't care about perfection and uniformity, they care about flavour. Whereas we seem to value perfection and uniformity and the way things look over variety and taste. I think that's the wrong way round. My cousin's wife is from San Francisco but she is a complete foodie. We were wandering up and down the market and she was saying "look at this" and "look at this". There were massive boeuf tomatoes and they may be a bit pocked on the outside, and they were not completely uniform, but you know they're amazing. They were saying to you "taste it" because they know that's the way you're going to buy it, as opposed to here where they just put some wax on the skin, and that's a completely different way of valuing things. I don't know where we lost taste and variety over visual qualities. Buying local is a way of trying to get back to that, but we need to be much more open minded about it. All this stuff that turns up in French markets, every day, you've got little blokes who are producing their own little cheeses which frankly look pretty unappetising, but oh my god when you taste them they taste fantastic. We don't seem to be prepared to take that leap. I don't know why that is. If we don't get braver, we are just going to lose, well I think we've already lost that kind of stuff, we'd have to start again from scratch. I think it's really sad. I'm going to Toulouse on Thursday so here we go again [laughs]. I think also they care about food more than we do.

J: Is there any particular ways that you prepare food that are from the past or particular to your family, or form a particular ritual in terms of what you do?

I: Well I don't know about particular to my family because how would I know they weren't done in other places? I don't know about that [laughter].

J: Did your mother ever make a cake in a particular way, that you do?

I: Family, I think I've got two rituals that I've inherited, only two. One, and this is the time I always think about my mum most, is preserving. My mum was a really big preserver and she always made jam and chutney and stuff like that and obviously for years and years and years I didn't do that, and when we started growing stuff, we've got an apple tree in our garden which we planted when we first got married. It was a little stick then, and now it is the most productive apple tree I've ever seen in my entire life. It produces every year this massive glut of apples, and you've always got an overflow of something like green tomatoes or courgettes, and things like that. So a few years ago I started making chutney with all this stuff. It was only when I was looking for something to make the chutney in and I had this big tin pot under the floor that I'd got from my parents when dad died, and I remembered that this used to be the pot my mum made chutney in. Then I found a spoon, and I thought "oh my god I am recreating my childhood here". It was quite weird, she'd been dead a long time by then, and I'd never really thought about it. It was only when I was literally stood in the kitchen with all this stuff and this spoon and this pot that I realised this. I quite liked that. I've still got a couple of old recipe books and this old preserving book, and I'd used it and it's the only thing I really do like apart from kedgeree which my mother used to make on Christmas morning, and it always reminds me of Christmas mornings when I was a kid when I make it now.

J: Is there anything you do with your family- I'm sorry I've got no idea whether you have family- in particular way that you think you are creating a ritual?

I: Well I don't have children, so it doesn't really work like that. When my niece used to come and stay with me a lot when she was little and I think we created a few little rituals around her because my sister doesn't cook at all. My niece really loved to cook when she was little so we used to do a lot of cooking when she came. She would literally come with her apron for the week going "woo, come to stay!" So basically we used to have a week of cooking because she was so obsessed by it. I taught her how to make bread and I taught her to make soup - stuff she might find useful in later life.

J: It sounds like you cook a lot from scratch.

I: Yes, I only cook from scratch really, I don't really use anything prepared at all. I'm really terrible!

J: I've picked up that you reject ready prepared, Findus and this that and the other.

I: Completely. I might buy bacon in a packet but that's about it.

J: Do you bake much?

I: I don't really, I'm a bit gluten intolerant. I do make bread but I tend to use spelt flour to make spelt bread, and I don't make cakes at all. Well I probably make about two a year. I make one for work on my birthday because they expect me to turn up to work with a cake on my birthday. It's always rubbish because I don't get any practice in making them, so I've told them to expect tray bakes in the future as I'm better at those.

J: Does this gluten intolerance significantly affect your cookery?

I: No, I'm not massively gluten intolerant, I just have to keep it low. I used to bake a lot of bread but it wasn't good for me, so in the end I discovered it was best not to, and when I did to use spelt. That means we don't eat much pastry, and I don't bake because most baking involves using wheat flour, so I just don't. Apart from occasionally making some spelt bread.

J: Is there any particular baker that does a good spelt loaf locally that you've come across?

I: Well we used to have the wonderful Phoenix Bakery in Weymouth for a while but of course now he's gone so that's a bit sad. There is no great baker in Weymouth on a regular basis so that is why I tend to make my own.

J: Have you found that local producers have suffered a great deal then, if you found that that baker has gone, and you talked about sporadic supplies. Do you think they are struggling much? Do you think particularly in the last few years?

I: Yes, well it's a bit mixed market isn't it and that's the problem with all of it. It's all very well us sitting here talking about not using ready-prepared food, but I mean if I was poor and had four kids I'd probably go to Iceland and buy a load of ready meals because then I could feed them all for a fiver. If you had four kids under ten would you want to go home and make soup and bread for them fresh every night?

J: So, you're busy, so how do you spend your time in terms of food preparation? Do you make time for it?

I: I make time for it and I cook a lot of stuff which can be eaten twice, so I cook a lot of stuff that you eat one, put one in the fridge, put one in the freezer. So quite often if I'm going to cook anything I'll make at least six portions of it. So then we can have it tonight and the day after tomorrow, as you don't want the same two nights in a row [laughter]. If I want to cook something that takes a long time I'll do it at the weekend, or I'll spend a bit of time sorting it out. And I do think a lot about things like god if I need to marinate something then I have to remember to put it out the night before. So I make a list every week of what we're going to do.

J: That's very good, that's very organised.

I: Well otherwise we'd end up eating toast I think and that's not good for me [laughter].

J: But you clearly enjoy it as well.

I: I do enjoy it a lot, and my husband is quite good at helping with prep, so we will do it in the evening.

J: So that's quite sociable?

I: We eat late as well which helps. It wouldn't be good if we had kids, we wouldn't be able to do that at all. So, I'll come home from whatever it is I've done, and the stuff will be there prepped because I've left it there in the morning or the night before. So, we'll listen to the radio and have a chat and a glass of wine and cook like that, and then we just end up eating late. It's either that or you have a takeaway. I said this to him on several occasions, if you're not happy to do this you can cook! He's like "yeh alright" [laughs]. There have been periods when I have been so busy and got back really late so I've not been able to cook and he has had to cook, but it gets a bit boring after a while.

J: Yeh I know, my husbands a little bit restricted. It does take quite a bit of thought doesn't it?

I: Well that's the other thing, I still have to do all the thinking or else the stuff won't be in the cooker, because he'll come home from work and go "oh we're going to have this tonight" and I'm like "really? So how are you going to make that then?"

J: Where do you get your inspiration from in terms of what to have?

I: Primarily I look to see what's in the veg box and start planning around that. I've got a load of cookbooks.

J: Do you look at them much?

I: Not a lot, not as much as I ought to.

J: Do you look at the Internet?

I: I look at the Internet, and I also get the Guardian every weekend for their cook supplements, and nearly every week I make something out of that Guardian cook book. So the Saturday before last they had recipes using almonds, and they had a really nice dahl which used ground almonds in the dahl, so we had that during the week. I've got some people staying with me at the moment and they are both vegetarians, so we been on vegetarian challenge the last two weeks. So we had the dahl made with these ground almonds, obviously almonds are not very good and I did worry about this Californian drought [laughter].

J: Life is too short, and you have to be pragmatic.

I: We did also have a spinach and paneer [51:46] curry using spinach from the veg box and paneer that I had made myself using Yeo Valley milk, so I thought that compensated for it [laughs].

J: So, checks and balances.

I: This week they had recipes using coconut, also another lovely local ingredient [laughs] - not - and prawns. But of course, prawns not local, coconut not local. But equally we used them with the green beans that I'd got from the veg box, so you know.

J: Do they pick up on the seasonality?

I: No they don't they're rubbish. I've got the Nigel Slater Kitchen Diaries books. I use those quite a lot because they're very good for seasonality, they do that really well. I really like Middle Eastern cuisine. There is a woman called Sally Butcher who has a cafe in Peckham. Her husband is Iranian, have you come across her? It's great. She tweets as Persia in Peckham. She's got this cafe in Peckham, it's called Persepolis and it's about as big as this really, and they've got a shop and cafe, same thing. She cooks this vegetarian Persian-Iranian influenced food in the cafe. But obviously, added to the fact she lives in

Peckham. I've got a couple of her books and her stuff is fantastic. And you can really play around with it.

J: [anything else to eat?]

I: I've been on vegetarian fest at home recently so having a piece of pork's quite nice [laughs]. I always look at what's on the Guardian. I do use the internet and then I just sort of play around with stuff I suppose.

J: And as you say that veg box seems to be a key in-filler.

I: It has to be, you know carrots, well okay if you don't want soup again, what can we have this week? We do have a lot of soup, I have to say.

J: Do you enjoy thinking about it, do you like the challenge?

I: 99% of the time I really like it. Every so often I go "oh for Jesus Christ it would be a lot easier if I could just go to the supermarket [both laugh]. I do but that defeats the object really doesn't it because we've lost seasonality in our supermarkets as well. I think it's better than it was, but it's nowhere near as good as it could be. I am also fussy about supermarkets because I don't like places that are really over-packaged. I won't to go to Morrison's because they shrink-wrap their peppers. What's that all about?

J: I don't know Weymouth and what you've got around you.

I: Well, we've got an Asda which is massive. It has the biggest per square metre footfall in Britain. So it's not a very big Asda but the footfall is phenomenal because all the tourists go there. It's very central. We have a Sainsbury's which is quite new, which I have to say I will always go to rather than Asda, if only for the fact that it's got natural lighting as opposed to those flicker-y lights. Also they tend to have what you want as opposed to having just sold out of everything. But the veg in Asda is okay, and they don't shrink wrap everything which I quite like. I don't see why I should pay extra to have things wrapped in a plastic bag. And there is the Morrison's which I never go to because everything is over packaged, and I don't like it. We've also got an okay fruit and veg shop, it's not too bad, and a terrible butchers, so I'm missing a good local butcher. The fish markets are good- Samways do really good fish. The fish shops are really good, and the butchers are appalling, just don't understand it at all. And a really amazing health and wholefood shop. It's called Helen's Wholefoods and it's like going into- have you heard of The Spice Mistress, it's a really good book- a health food shop from the 1960's. You expect

everybody to have macramé tops on. Everything is just piled high with spices in little jars, and palm hearts, and all different kinds of stuff that you just couldn't get anywhere else. If that was in Bournemouth or London nobody would think twice about it, but in Weymouth it is just brilliant. She's run this shop for about 25 years and she is very good because she sells loose spices and loose rice and all this kind of stuff.

J: Are you buying spices for flavouring, I'm thinking throwing in herbs and spices?

I: Oh jeez, I use loads of spices.

J: In France we went to this château that had an exhibition about herbs and it was talking about all the medicinal properties of the herbs, and I just wondered if there was any other sort of uses you might get from the spices.

I: We lived in India for a year and I did a cookery course while I was there. This woman from Kerala... [56:52] who used to always talk about the medicinal use for every kind of bit of spice, you know rubbing turmeric on wounds because it's some kind of antiseptic apparently. Everything had some medicinal use. But do you know what? I don't take much medication, and if I do I'm gonna have an Ibuprofen thank you very much [laughs]. Apart from indigestion, that's about it really. I'm sure if I suddenly became very ill and had to start taking lots of medication I would investigate it further, but on the basis that I don't-

J: I just found it quite intriguing. I'm thinking of the herbs and how you can use that, I'm always very interested in that kind of thing.

I: I think it's very interesting because at the end of the day, it's only in the last 50 years that pharmaceutical drugs have become widely available, so historically everybody was treated with some kind of medicinal herbs and I think in a sense we are probably conned into relying on pharmaceutical drugs because of the profit. One day when I'm old and I've got time to research it I may well have a good look. So lavender for sleeplessness and mint for digestion, and rub your oil of cloves on your teeth when they hurt. And yeh I suppose I do all those things actually, but beyond that it's just one of those things that I just don't have time for really.

J: I won't keep you that much longer because I know you are busy, but socially, local food, do you get together with other people? Do you invite people round, and if you do invite people round what type of things are you cooking?

I: [laughs] That's really funny actually. I have a bit of a group of people that tend to come to dinner occasionally. It's difficult because I struggle to invite them all at the same time because they've all got particular likes and dislikes. Of the people that live locally to us that come for dinner quite often, I have a friend who is a massive foodie and completely loves aubergines, so he always has to have aubergines whenever he comes, but his wife doesn't eat fish. So we are limited to meaty aubergine-type things and that's okay. He's also obsessed with figs and I have a friend who has a fig tree in her garden so every time we get figs it's like "Richard would you like to come for dinner?" So they come and I tend to cook stuff that's around aubergines, chicken, he's just obsessed with it. But you know all the kind of fishy things you'd like to cook you can't, or else we do some kind of Indian style food. I've always got myriad recipes for that. I've got two other friends one of whom is vegetarian, which is fine, but her partner is dyspraxic. So he has sensory issues around food, so he doesn't eat aubergines. So I can't meet Mr Aubergine and Mr No Aubergine at the same time. I have done it but it got a bit traumatic by the time I had no meat and no aubergines. He doesn't like things like aubergines or courgettes or mushrooms, and she's a vegetarian, so it gets a bit tricky so I have to get creative here. Sometimes he just has to put up with the courgettes.

J: So is that restricting?

I: So last time they came we actually had kedgeree and I just left the fish out of hers, and she was fine with that. So she had like a spicy rice thing, which was very nice, and we had wilted spinach with mustard seed so that was OK. She was happy, and she also hadn't told me she was coming, so it was a bit tricky.

J: Anything local in that?

I: The spinach was local, and the onions obviously, from the veg box. Then I have another couple of friends who come, but he is also a bit funny about textures. So he says he won't eat fruit, but he eats bloody crumble so that's okay, so I said to him "that's it you're having crumble", though I did make a chocolate mousse the last time he was there - local chocolate and local Yeo Valley butter, obviously always Yeo Valley butter. What else did I have? What's that company called- Little Pods? [1:01:23] They do chocolate-

J: Chococo?

I: No they do flavourings- chocolate essence and vanilla in a tube, stuff like that.

J: Yeh, I know, I've seen it in the shop. Where do you shop for all this stuff?

I: Oh god all over the place - food markets, Helen's, drop into Olives Et Al every time I go to Sturminster. Simon's Deli in Dorchester is really good for stuff and they'll order stuff in for you as well, like chorizo etc. if you need it. You get more and more stuff in supermarkets if you want, if you see them. The Fridge in Dorchester is really good. If you go to Dorchester there's a shop called The Fridge which is basically a cheese shop selling 90 different kinds of cheese. It's a tiny shop, about as big as a fridge, but they also have a wall full of local crackers and chutneys and those kind of things, and olives and stuff that goes with cheese.

All the spices come from Helen's because she sells them loose and you can buy however much you want. I don't buy much ground spice, I tend to buy it whole. It was very funny, when I was did this cookery course in India there were lots of Indian women doing bits of it as well and I was talking to them then about buying spices and stuff and this woman said to me "You shouldn't ever buy ground spices, it's much cheaper to buy whole spices and get your maid to grind it for you!" [laughs] I said that might work in India but I don't think it would work at home. But I have to say I did take her point so I don't really buy anything ground. I tend to grind it all myself. Well it's better isn't it, because you get the flavour out of it. My kitchen cupboard is a bit of a pantry, it's a bit like pears and pomegranates. Peckham is- every time I go to the shop in Peckham I pick things up from there, because she does Iranian lines, stuff you're going to put in an Indian ratatouille and stuff like that.

J: Is there anything else you want to tell me about local food or local food brands, that haven't come out?

I: I don't think so. I'm very conscious of the fact that I'm talking to you about it from a very privileged position, where I've got enough money to be able to do this and although I am really busy, my busyness can be moved around so that I can make time to do this stuff. I am very aware of the fact that if I was a young mum living on benefits with four kids then none of what we've been talking about would be achievable at all, in terms of time or money or just the time to think about it. Because the time I devote more to, more than the cooking is about what are we going to have and making a little plan. I sat down at the weekend and looked at what was in the fridge and what we were going to eat between now and when we go on holiday, so I can make sure we use everything up. I

made a shopping list – if I go and buy these five things so that I can use everything up by Thursday. I don't like waste.

J: That's almost- is "frugality" too-?

I: It is a bit frugal, but in an expensive kind of way. We're talking about waste not money.

J: Where does that come from?

I: Definitely from my parents. It definitely comes from the fact that my parents were both born just before the war and they came from a very "waste not want not" background. My grandma was very "waste not want not" and nothing got thrown away. Everything got reused. It was before the concept of recycling was really available, but obviously not everything came in packages like it does now, so they were very much "don't throw anything away". I think it helps that my husband is also very keen on not throwing things away. His obsession is packaging, and he really gets upset by excess packaging, so we are very careful about what we throw away. We've got a big compost bin in the garden and we compost all our veg waste. We hardly actually throw anything out. Again, that's privileged because if I had a load of kids you wouldn't be able to do that. We are very careful about not buying stuff, partly about caring for the environment in two ways, partly not using vital resource that can be used in a different way for packaging - why should oil that can be used for medical products be used to wrap my bacon up? It seems pointless to me. But it's also about landfill as well because landfill's so expensive. People chuck old crap away and then object to paying their council tax, but frankly they need to see the link between those two things. If you're throwing things away that have to go to landfill then the council is going to have to pay to run the landfill. These things are all connected. It's all very well going "oh dear these poor hill farmers" but if you're not buying the meat that comes off their animals then it's your fault frankly.

J: Anything else that you wanted to add to how you feel about local food or what local food brands mean to you?

I: I think it's really nice that individual areas have got an identifiable product and product range. I'm quite pleased that I've lived in Dorset during the period of time where that's become much more of a thing. As I go around the country now I can see that happening more and more in different counties. When I first moved to Dorset it was obvious here and it was obvious in Yorkshire and always Cornwall, but it wasn't obvious in lots of other places. Now you can see it in Cheshire and very much Shropshire, Ludlow and that

area. Everywhere you go people are getting more and more aware of dominion I think I would call it, in a sense, and I think that's good, but I think we need to be not obsessive about it. That whole thing about the boundary lines are so fake that we need to forget about that and talking about food miles which would be a much better way of thinking about it. But equally you've got to be a bit flexible about that. I think if you become too puritanical about these ways then it's not going to work for you. I think food producers need to be aware of that as well. At the moment they've done a really good job of targeting themselves at middle class and a middle class thinking audience, but if they really want to survive they're going to need to target their products more widely, because they can't rely on middle-class pounds. I don't know what the middle-class equivalent of the pink and grey pound is, but that's what they need to be targeting themselves at. They really need to be looking at a wider base, and somewhere along the line - I don't like the word educate because it comes over as a sort of brainwashing type of idea - but somehow we need to be popularising the whole concept of cooking from scratch and local produce and buying more widely and more variety in taste over shape and form – and getting people to understand that this is the way ahead rather than a way backwards. I don't know how we do that, I haven't got a magic wand, I wish I did. But there is a very small section of society that's bought into that at the moment. There is a very big section that hasn't, and if they want to survive they're going to have to find a way into that big section.

J: If we had more time I'd tell you about the work I'm doing about sustainable cities, but now I'll switch this off and thank you that's brilliant. [01:09:29]

Transcription time: 6 hours 58 mins

Member checking: (email exchange) 29/05/2016

Hi Jill

That all looks fine to me. I am astonished that I said 'Wetherspoon' but can't think what it might be a misrepresentation of and apart from that it is as true as far as I remember it.

Best (name deleted)

From: Jill Quest

29/05/2016

Sent Items

Good morning [REDACTED]!

Thanks so much for taking the trouble with this. I'd like to include this in my PhD as it was a really interesting interview and you had some valuable things to say.

I attach an amended version which takes note of your comments. As I mentioned in my previous email, I'm going through this process of 'member checking' which is where I check that your interpretation of the situation tallies with mine. As such, it would be great if you could drop me an e-mail that confirms that this is the case.

Really good to hear from you and I continue to enjoy your tweets!

Jill

This is **Flora**. Unfortunately, my voice recorder expired so I took notes. These were checked with Flora after the interview.

A Charmouth Perspective: 9/7/15. Salt Pig Café Time 9.50 – 11.10

The venue was highly appropriate as it stocked a range of local foods, fish, meat and Dorset brands and provided a great back drop for the interview. It was run by James (have his card) who used to be a shepherd. The café was relatively quiet given the earlier time of day. We took a little while to settle down, order breakfast, sort change for car parks and fight with the recording equipment. The recording device then refused to work so this interview was captured through the interviewer's notes.

*What does local mean to you?*

This was seen through three perspectives –

1. F draws an imaginary circle and it can be firstly anything between 20 and a 25-mile radius. In relation to food, it has not had to be transported very far.
2. There's another level above that which includes farms that F drives past.
3. The final level consists of producers that F knows personally.

*Spontaneously what local brands can you name?*

Dorset Cereals

Filbert's honey products (although F has own hive) so its candles, gifts etc.

Olives et al.

Liberty (Fields)

Furleigh Estate (Vineyard)

Mannabonbons (Chocolate). Owner is a friend.

Felicity's – F knows Felicity well and knew her when Felicity ran a gardening shop in Charmouth. Felicity's has all the aspects of a brand considered such as trust, quality in what she stocks. There is a misperception of expense at Felicity's.

Washingpool Farm shop

Organix (baby food). It was the founder's dream always to be stocked in Felicity's.

Bunnies Love – carrot and orange marmalade mentioned.

F mentioned the Food and Film sessions run in Beaminster where there is a loose food connection with the films shown (e.g. Fried Green Tomatoes) and there is accompanying local food.

F tried to recall a snack-based brand – as stocked in Felicity's. Both interviewer and interviewee failed to recall....

F. enjoys sending out local food hampers as gifts and spontaneously mentioned Longman cheese and butter (Somerset)

*So, from these prompt sheets, what local brands here are familiar to you?*

Dorset Tea, Palmers, Dorset Blue Vinney.

Black Cow - noted for its present giving attributes – her local NISA shop sells around 5-6 bottles per week in the season as take-home gifts. Circa £25 - good business for the shop.

F doesn't think of Denhay as local when discussed, nor possibly Dorset Cereals – more the “big-boys” as they are more commercial. F no longer engages with Green and Blacks, Innocent, Tropicana and has stopped buying these brands (as they sold out to bigger companies). Discussion as to owners of Dorset Cereals – (Wellness Foods has now sold to ABF – Jordans and Ryvita Company (June 2014) <http://news.sky.com/story/1275536/jordans-wraps-up-50m-dorset-cereals-deal>)

F likes to deal with smaller producers and likes the values of a smaller brand.

*What are these values?*

A producer that has the passion to produce a quality product as exemplified by Mannabonbons. A producer that is doing some good, bringing employment and has the ideal skills to produce such a quality product. Supporting local producers creates skills, generates employment, and F admires those taking the risk to set up in business. That's why she supports Felicity's who started her business when she inherited some money.

Continuing with the prompted brands, F doesn't include Purbeck (Ice Cream) as it is outside her defined territory.

Dorset Coffee Company is supported and Trill Farm. This is run by the ex-Neal's Yard owner, near Musbury in Devon and not far from River Cottage HQ. They have volunteers assisting and the enterprise supports those who've had troubled backgrounds (past offenders, etc.). F particularly praised the branding approach to their leaves and comments that the brand building approach has included endorsements/sourcing information given on restaurant menus by those stocking/using the salads. F mentioned "rigorous brand management" and it is highly effective, particularly on more of a commodity focused product.

The farm is run on a Hugh Fernley Whittingstall model. They offer Friday night suppers at £35 (bring own wine) and this is prefaced by an appropriately themed and thought-provoking talk, for example it may be about concerns about whales and their plight. Or it might be something connected with the environment and food management. There was a discussion that this was an experiential concept and F described it as an idyllic experience with strong values - and it feels like you are doing some good when you visit. "Provide good, eat good, doing good". Whilst it is run by professionals it has help from the volunteers which is why prices can be kept at a reasonable level. F used adjectives like "good" and "virtuous". There is a communal feeling particularly at the dining event. The eating experience is shared by others who have similar interests. It is for those who like experiences and have got through the "stuff" phase. There is the opportunity to meet producers there and it is good to "look the chef in the eye" and appreciate that the food has come from the "garden - kitchen - table".

Around 40 people attend the presentation and the meal and typically might be those who live in Beaminster, Charmouth, etc. and maybe come down from London plus those that

have the charity or the food interest and hail from that community. Possibly those are more in the minority, but this is a good mix. It has a “talked-about factor”.

In the same light, F enjoys visiting Eggardon Hill for dinner as produced/provided by the local sheep farmer. It’s an event that captures the sunset, the lamb, the local food producer, the local environment, outdoor eating, eating close to the elements – a little like what can be captured at Hive Beach Café.

*What do you use local food brands for?*

F doesn’t eat meat. However, she likes to use the brands as ingredients as she cooks from scratch and won’t buy ready meals. F feels these brands add quality to a meal e.g. Liberty (Fields) balsamic vinegar makes any salad taste great. A quality ingredient will make a dish as good as it can be. F likes to use more local ingredients particularly for dinner parties and enjoys sharing the experience. Throughout the dinner the food can be the subject of the conversation. It is discovering different tastes and discussing them - a sharing of discoveries.

F also buys local food brands as gifts for Christmas and other occasions – and it can be particularly interesting when buying for someone that comes from Manchester for example and you give them an insight into what Dorset can produce. Also, F likes to give gifts that are useful and something that won’t be put in a cupboard somewhere. She likes to give “experiences”. This is giving a “sense of Dorset” and it helps to embellish Dorset. It is also good for visitors to bring back something from Dorset. And there is something “vaguely educational” about this. F told the story of a friend of hers, a judge that visited Dorset and spoke warmly of their experiences and F felt like she had given a good experience by given that her friends said they now knew more about the county. It was giving a good understanding of the county and that it was “not trapped in the 1970s”.

F also spoke of the quality of life given by the food and “eating by the sea”.

F was asked to unpack “taste” a little further and she spoke of olive oil, not just adding a slick to green leaves but enhancing the flavour. It enhances the meal. It is worth paying the premium to get a really good flavour.

Taste can also evoke the thought of previous meals and when probed further F drew upon gift giving and that sense of evoking a past occasion. F further commented that good ingredients should not be hidden and gave a straightforward example of a cottage pie that

can taste good particularly when it is related back to the quality of its ingredients. Ingredients can be inspirational and enhance taste and flavour.

F also then commented that this is definitely not functional eating and she eats for emotion.

F said that after taste comes smell and gave the example of balsamic vinegar. She spoke enthusiastically of the smell of cheese shops and Neal's Yard. She drew upon Mannabonbons' smell which somehow seems stronger than other chocolate smells and associates a good smell with quality. Taste and smell were strongly correlated. F commented that "you eat with your eyes first" and the presentation of food is important. She says she is also a "sucker for good packaging" and cited Bunnies Love, Liberty Fields' bottles – "the delicacy of their bottles...quietly sophisticated...every inch of that brand is clever. The touch, labels and choice of bottles...it's beyond clever". And this is linked to price – it is worth paying another £2...or so

Then we discussed memory and "every meal is about creating memories". Even straightforward "family meals are chatty family places with Bunnies Love on the table". F doesn't want her children to be picky but to try foods.

Then there are special occasions, and this can help create fond memories of times well spent with friends.

As a new mum, one can be a creator of memories, and every mum wants to feel that they can shape their children and what they can take onwards into their lives. An example of children's birthday cakes was given ... "when I was seven you baked me the snake cake". F reminisced that "in the 1970s and 80's food was so bland and we tell the kids about the things we used to eat – such as Findus...".

F was asked about the significance of foods and what they may symbolise.

F spoke about four examples.

1. She talked about growing potatoes and what that might represent in that it is an enabler and allows you to grow your own vegetables. "It is about self...something - self – sustenance" F spoke of growing herbs and the importance of her children recognising and identifying which herbs are which.

2. She spoke of recalling memories of food from the past and her partner's recollection of dandelion and burdock with northern overtones. Plus potatoes again.
3. The importance of demonstrating to children the importance of where food comes from. Her daughter's pony has hay supplied by Tom, who also rears cows and "this is Tom's cow we are eating". Creating a link to places such as "Eggardon Hill and that the lambs that we eat are reared there. This is where comes from, its provenance, its reality". F spoke of local brands that involve "love, passion and nurture – all instrumental in their production". It is important to know where something is from, its location and have some knowledge of that place. This fits with F's concern over food miles/ air miles and it is inappropriate to eat a strawberry at Christmas from Israel. Seasonality is an integral part of the local brand.
4. Cooking – all her children can cook – make cakes, pancakes and brownies. It is useful to learn how to cook for people. And these brands can facilitate cooking in that they provide ingredients that support cooking and sharing. Food and drink can be inspirational, it gives a great experience and good social contact.

*Are there any rituals that you follow?*

"Loads – just need to think of which ones to share" How A always has a tuna sandwich, a bottle of coke and some crisps prior to Saturday afternoon's football. The pink lemonade that was originally found in Italy and its particular bottles. It's a treat drink, for Christmas day and now sold in Waitrose.

When F goes to a dinner party she takes Mannabonbons as a gift. When probed as to why these are special, the producer is a friend who produces the chocolates on her kitchen table. She has a good website and it's a great product offering a great experience. The producer wants to do just enough to sustain herself and her family and do something whilst the kids are at school She sources from cacao from Treefoods (check) in Honiton and the chocolates only use four ingredients, cacao, salt, butter, flavour. Simple quality ingredients made into chocolate with distinctive brown sleeve packaging that is highly tactile and offers a good opening experience. Distributed in only around 10 outlets – it encompasses the producer's own passion and her own skill. It can be found in Fruits of the Earth in Bridport and F wants more and more people to taste it so that everyone can

taste good things. It needs to be kept refrigerated. It offers simplicity, it has good ingredients and no additives.

The process of keeping it in the fridge was discussed which was to improve its shelf life. F felt that this treats it with respect, it reflects the organic nature of the food, it's natural life, it's perishability and this somehow needs more thought... "it was almost as if it was a living thing... "

When asked if F had any traditions, again, "loads". The plucking of raspberries from their bushes in Sept for pancakes. Creating "wow moments at the table...go see what's in the fridge". Sometimes holding some food back, keeping it separate as a surprise to elicit a "wow" from her children. Having brownies and clotted cream on Sundays firstly popping into Felicity's on Thursday/Friday to go fetch ready for the Sunday tea.

F. has twins of 11 and a daughter of 15 and on summer Tuesdays when they finish school a little earlier, they have dinner on the beach, in their beach hut, and get together with friends – this is important communal eating. Her children have their own places at the table and everyone has their own personalised beaded mat. F insists on eating together both at breakfast and in the evening.

On Christmas Eve (as no-one likes Christmas pudding) they make their own chocolate roulade and strawberries.

*Is there anything else you would like to add?*

F feels strongly about the importance of educating future generations about food and mentioned a "food wilderness". She feels we are losing a feel for "local food, real food". She worries about the next eneration. She wants schools and brands to engage with this further – such as Organix, Waitrose...to allow their kitchens to be useful to show people how to cook, and how to create and follow recipes. This is "real" stuff'.

*So, is there meaning for you in this word "real"?*

Yes, it represents the value, the effort gone to, the cooking from scratch, the experience, the education, the eating together, the social, the love and energy – all of this is connected with real.

F is also prepared and says she's fortunate enough to be able to pay a price premium. There was a recognition of being "middle class". She's anti –Tesco and hates how they treat farmers and spoke as to how the supermarkets have "trashed value" over the years.

Finally, she admitted that whilst being a vegetarian she's now experimenting with fish to add to her repertoire of tastes and flavours. She's also doing it for health. She mentioned that when she eats fish for the first time, there is no memory recollection but remarks on how quickly these associations are created and then referred back to. She draws parallels with squid and halloumi cheese in that they have a similar tactile sensation. The cheese provided the closest reference that she could think of.

*Thank you!*

F has mentioned three potential further respondents.

Member checking (email exchange):

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: 02 September 2015 14:17

Member Checking:

To: Jill Quest  
Hi Jill,

Just arrived back from hols this morning so I had 5 mins to read this - It definitely represents what we talked about and I hope some of it is useful to you (and I didn't waffle too much!).

I'm glad you met [REDACTED] I'm sure it was a good chat, she is very entertaining. Let me know if you are in the neighbourhood anytime and we can have coffee or sample some great local food. All the best. F

On 13 Jul 2015, at 12:22, Jill Quest <JQuest@bournemouth.ac.uk> wrote:

Hi [REDACTED] - thank you so much for your time on Thursday. I have attached my notes from our interview, and I'd be very grateful if you might look over them to see if I have accurately captured the sense of what you were saying. Where possible I have tried to recall some of your exact words (in inverted commas) so please let me know if these are OK. Plus, it may be that you want to add or further tweak a phrase or quote., I'm also extremely grateful for your suggestion of three further potential contacts albeit I'll quite understand if they are too busy or just simply don't want to participate. Needless to say, I'm happy to meet them at their convenience and do hope that they enjoy the discussion.

Thank you once again! Jill

## Appendix 14: Approved Ethics checklist

About Your Checklist	
Reference Id	4730
Status	Approved
Date Approved	02/02/2015 12:19:47
Date Submitted	30/01/2015 13:11:17

Researcher Details	
Name	Jill Quest
Faculty	Faculty of Media & Communication
Status	Postgraduate Research (MRes, MPhil, PhD, DProf, EngD, EdD)
Course	Postgraduate Research - Media
Have you received external funding to support this research project?	No

Project Details	
Title	To explore the brand meaning of local food brands
End Date of Project	31/08/2015
Proposed Start Date of Data Collection	02/03/2015
Supervisor	
Approver	Research Ethics Panel
Summary - no more than 500 words (including detail on background methodology, sample, outcomes, etc.)	
<p>This study will explore the tangibility of brand meaning of local food brands from a consumer perspective. The conceptual framework is derived from Hirschman's layers of meaning (1980a, 1998) and the direct sensory, idiosyncratic, subcultural and cultural labels, together with the tangible attributes and intangible associations, provide key units of analysis. Brand meaning resides in the minds of consumers (Batey 2008) so this research will be explored from their perspective. It adopts an interpretivist approach to uncover subjective meanings held by consumers and their connections with brands. Data will be captured through consumer-focused, ethnographic methods which include accompanied shopping trips, kitchen visits and interviews (Elliott and Elliott 2002, de Kervenoael et al. 2014). The gathering of photographic evidence and diary completion will also be considered. Using participant observation to experience what meanings are interpreted by the participants, it is intended to conduct 5-10 shopping trips and then 5-10 kitchen visits. These will be followed up with 20-25 in-depth interviews together with gathering any data from photographs or diaries. However these approaches will be piloted to determine the most appropriate combination of methods. Whilst consumers of local food vary there is support that family households with older children aged 10-15 tend to be the greatest consumers in this local area and they would therefore form an appropriate population to sample (Mintel 2011). Blake et al. (2010) refers to so called "middle class" Britons who like to cook food with raw ingredients and have the requisite shopping skills are more engaged with local food than lower income household. This criteria assists with sample selection initially. Farm shops such as Felicity's or Washingpool in west Dorset will be the initial starting point for recruitment of local food consumers. Purposive sampling will ensue with regular shoppers to the shops being identified with the assistance of the retailers possibly using a flyer with which to gain interest. Snowball sampling may then follow. This study will be carried out in line with the Research Ethics Code of Practice of Bournemouth University 2014. For all research participants the key principles apply. The research process will ensure quality, integrity and value. It will accord with standards of good practice which includes the concept of 'non-maleficence' (do no harm) and 'beneficence' (do positive good). All participants will be informed about the research methods, purpose and its intended use. Participant supplied information will be respected and respondents participate voluntarily, with no coercion. Anonymity and</p>	

anonymisation of results will be fully considered. In particular whilst the main adult research participant is the purchaser of local foods the sample population will include contact with children aged 10-15. Therefore particular attention will be paid to the ethical issues surrounding this vulnerable age group. This will include informing parents about the level of involvement of their children, the research process including both observation and casual conversations, the type of brands to be discussed, their consent, and their presence during the research process albeit the researcher is fully CRB (DBS) checked.

#### External Ethics Review

Does your research require external review through the NHS National Research Ethics Service (NRES) or through another external Ethics Committee?	No
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#### Research Literature

Is your research solely literature based?	No
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#### Human Participants

Does your research specifically involve participants who are considered vulnerable (i.e. children, those with cognitive impairment, those in unequal relationships—such as your own students, prison inmates, etc.)?	Yes
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Is a DBS check required?	No
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Does the study involve participants age 16 or over who are unable to give informed consent (i.e. people with learning disabilities)? NOTE: All research that falls under the auspices of the <a href="#">Mental Capacity Act 2005</a> must be reviewed by NHS NRES.	No
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Will the study require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the groups or individuals to be recruited? (i.e. students at school, members of self-help group, residents of Nursing home?)	Yes
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Will it be necessary for participants to take part in your study without their knowledge and consent at the time (i.e. covert observation of people in non-public places)?	No
--	----

Will the study involve discussion of sensitive topics (i.e. sexual activity, drug use, criminal activity)?	No
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Are drugs, placebos or other substances (i.e. food substances, vitamins) to be administered to the study participants or will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind?	No
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Will tissue samples (including blood) be obtained from participants? Note: If the answer to this question is 'yes' you will need to be aware of obligations under the <a href="#">Human Tissue Act 2004</a> .	No
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Could your research induce psychological stress or anxiety, cause harm or have negative consequences for the participant or researcher (beyond the risks encountered in normal life)?	No
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Will your research involve prolonged or repetitive testing?	No
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Will the research involve the collection of audio materials?	Yes
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Is this audio collection solely for the purposes of transcribing/summarising and will not be used in any outputs (publication, dissemination, etc.) and will not be made publicly available?	Yes
--	-----

Will your research involve the collection of photographic or video materials?	Yes
---	-----

Will financial or other inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?	No
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Please explain below why your research project involves the above mentioned criteria (be sure to explain why the sensitive criterion is essential to your project's success). Give a summary of the ethical issues and any action that will be taken to address these. Explain how you will obtain informed consent (and from whom) and how you will inform the participant(s) about the research project (i.e. participant information sheet). A sample consent form and participant information sheet can be found on the [Research Ethics](#) website.

Children 10-15 are likely to be part of the household involved in the research process. Whilst the majority of the contact is intended to be with the main adult research participant who is the purchaser of local foods, there is likely to be casual conversation and observation with the children and their interaction with local food. So parents (or gatekeepers) will be informed about the level of involvement of their children, the research process including both observation and casual conversations and the type of brands to be discussed. Their consent will be requested together with their presence during the research process albeit the researcher is fully CRB (DBS) checked. Audio materials will be captured purely to assist with transcribing the data. Photographs typically could include shots of how the food is prepared or presented. The focus will be on the food and not the participants and their anonymity will be preserved.

Final Review	
<b>Will you have access to personal data that allows you to identify individuals OR access to confidential corporate or company data (that is not covered by confidentiality terms within an agreement or by a separate confidentiality agreement)?</b>	No
<b>Will your research involve experimentation on any of the following: animals, animal tissue, genetically modified organisms?</b>	No
<b>Will your research take place outside the UK (including any and all stages of research: collection, storage, analysis, etc.)?</b>	No
<b>Please use the below text box to highlight any other ethical concerns or risks that may arise during your research that have not been covered in this form.</b>	
Participant Information sheets and Consent forms will be forwarded separately using this same form.	

Attached documents
Consent Form.docx - attached on 30/01/2015 13:11:02
Participant Information Sheet - accompanied shopping trip.docx - attached on 30/01/2015 13:11:02
Participant Information Sheet - kitchen visit children.docx - attached on 30/01/2015 13:11:02
Participant Information Sheet - kitchen visit.docx - attached on 30/01/2015 13:11:02

## **Appendix 15: Participant Information Sheet – Accompanied shopping trip**

Hello and my name is Jill Quest. I'm really interested in local food brands and what they mean to you. I'm conducting this research for my PhD which is to explore the brand meaning of local food brands. This information sheet gives you some information to help you decide whether or not you wish to take part. Please take time to read it and let me know if you have any questions or need any clarifications.

I'd like to invite you to help me with my research. This consist of me accompanying you when you go shopping for local food. Typically this will involve observation and conversation about what is being considered and/or purchased. Your input is entirely up to you - you can stop at any time and don't have to give me a reason. You don't have to answer particular question(s) if you don't want to.

*What will the results will be used for?*

With your permission I will observe, take notes and if possible record the conversations. This will then be summarised, transcribed and analysed for my PhD. All your contributions will be strictly anonymised and your confidentiality will be respected. This work is being conducted in line with the Research Ethics Code of Practice of Bournemouth University 2015 which is designed to ensure quality, integrity and value.

*Are there any other stages of this research?*

Yes, if you like you can help me with a kitchen visit and a further interview, but it is up to you as to the extent to which you'd like to be involved.

*Contact details?*

Jill Quest: Senior Practice Fellow.

Work telephone 01202 965244 Mobile: 07812 982353

Email [jquest@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:jquest@bournemouth.ac.uk)

My supervisors are Dr John Oliver Associate Professor and Dr Sue Eccles, Head of Education Media School.

We are all available at The Media School, Bournemouth University, Poole BH12 5BB

Email: [joliver@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:joliver@bournemouth.ac.uk)

Email: [seccles@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:seccles@bournemouth.ac.uk)

## Appendix 16: Participant Consent Form

Brand Meaning of Local Food Brands – PhD research

Name, position and contact details of researcher: Jill Quest, Senior Practice Fellow, Bournemouth University. Email: [jquest@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:jquest@bournemouth.ac.uk)

Name, position and contact details of supervisors: Dr Sue Eccles; Head of Education. Email [seccles@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:seccles@bournemouth.ac.uk).

Dr John Oliver Associate Professor. Email: [joliver@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:joliver@bournemouth.ac.uk)

### Please Initial Here

I confirm that I have read and understood the participant information sheet for the above research project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.	
I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from contributing to the study at any time. I understand that I may request that my responses can also be withdrawn up to the point where that data is anonymised.	
I am happy for the researcher to take notes or record what I say. I am willing to check a summary of the transcribed proceedings for accuracy.	
I give permission for the researcher to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports that result from the research.	
I agree to take part in the above research project.	
I give my consent for my children to be involved in the study and be present in the company of the researcher. However, I understand that I will be present also at this time.	

<p>The purpose of the research will be explained to them. Only local food brands will be discussed.</p> <p>Their participation is voluntary, and they are free to withdraw at any time.</p> <p>We may request that their responses can also be withdrawn up to the point where that data is anonymised.</p> <p>They won't be photographed but may be recorded or notes taken.</p> <p>The researcher will have access to their anonymised responses. Their names will not be linked with the research materials, and they will not be identified or identifiable in the research study.</p>	
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Please print name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_