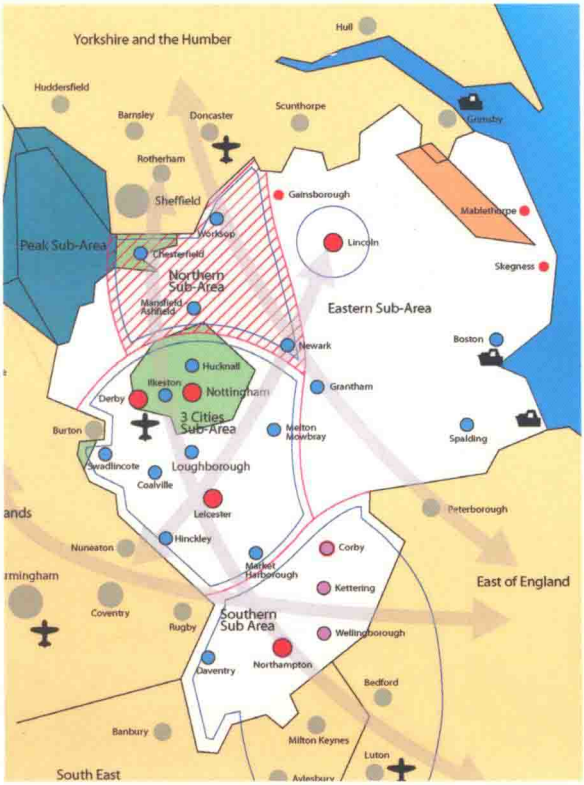
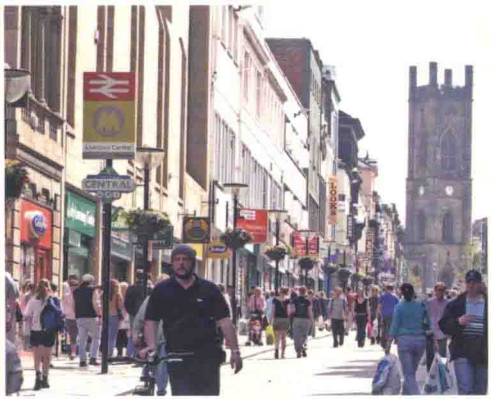
ENGLISH REGIONAL PLANNING 2000–2010

LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE





EDITED BY

CORINNE SWAIN, TIM MARSHALL AND TONY BADEN

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English Regional Planning 2000–2010

Lessons for the future

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AND TONY BADEN

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English Regional Planning 2000–2010

English Regional Planning 2000–2010 chronicles a vital feature of recent UK planning activity, during the period of the Blair and Brown Labour governments up to 2010. It deals particularly with the scale of planning during these years, whereby large steps forward were made, but where policy making often proved very controversial. One purpose of the book is to learn from the many areas of policy development, method and skills which evolved during the decade up to 2010. This will mean that a future return to strategic planning should not have to reinvent the wheel. This book also helps to inform such planning in the rest of the developed world where higher-level planning is more prevalent.

The book has eight chapters written by experts active in English regional planning during these years, alongside two chapters by the editors introducing and concluding on the experience as a whole. Thematic topics covered include the way in which housing and employment development was tackled in the varying English regional contexts, and the growing influence of transport and environmental factors on the spatial strategy. Process elements covered include how policy was made through public consultation and working with numerous stakeholders (economic, social, environmental), how the public examination of issues was organised, followed by final consideration by central government, and how monitoring informed the next policy review.

The authors do not gloss over the difficulties encountered in the highly contested world of English local and regional politics, or the ways in which central government management of the regional planning process made life on the ground difficult for those engaged in the process. Nevertheless the account as a whole shows how a wealth of innovative and forward-looking practices were developed. This multi-faceted study contributes to the understanding of how strategic planning can provide the framework for guiding spatial change and allocating resources, looking to a long-term sustainable future.

Corinne Swain is a former Director of the international consultancy Arup, and is now an Arup Fellow. She chaired many examinations in public of regional strategy throughout England during the Regional Spatial Strategy era. She has served on several advisory groups, including, currently, the Mayor's Outer London Commission.

Tim Marshall is Reader in Planning at Oxford Brookes University. He has researched regional planning in Britain and other European countries since the late 1990s and is joint author with John Glasson of *Regional Planning* (Routledge, 2007). Most recently he has researched the planning of major infrastructure, under an ESRC (Economic and Social Research Council)-funded fellowship.

Tony Baden is now retired but for many years worked in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and its predecessors where he was, inter alia, responsible for regional planning. Prior to joining central government he worked for SERPLAN (London and South East Regional Planning Conference).

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TABLES

3.1 Productivity per person in employment 1993 and 2008 33
3.2 Job creation 1971–2004 33

CONTRIBUTORS

INITIATORS AND EDITORIAL TEAM (ALSO AUTHORS)

Corinne Swain OBE, MA (Cantab), MPhil, FRTPI is a former Director of the international consultancy Arup, and is now an Arup Fellow. She chaired many examinations in public of regional strategy throughout England during the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) era. She has served on several advisory groups, including, currently, the Mayor's Outer London Commission.

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AUTHORS OF MAIN CHAPTERS

Catriona Riddell BA (Hons) Planning, MRTPI is Director of Catriona Riddell Associates, a planning consultancy she established in 2010. She was Director of Planning at the South East England Regional Assembly with overall responsibility for the Regional Spatial Strategy. Before that she was Head of Strategic Policy at Surrey County Council.

Andrew Pritchard BA (Hons), MA, MRTPI is Director of Policy and Infrastructure for East Midlands Councils. Andrew managed the Regional Planning Body (RPB) function in the East Midlands between 2001 and 2010, leading on three RPG (Regional Planning Guidance)/RSS reviews. Before this he worked in local government at both district and county levels.

Chris Martin BA (Hons), BTP, MRTPI (retired) is a former Deputy Chief Executive of the Local Government Association in Yorkshire and Humber and previously Executive Director of the Yorkshire and Humber Assembly, managing the regional planning function. His previous career was spent in local government.

David Payne BSc, MSc, MRTPI established Cissbury Consulting Ltd in 2010. Previously Planning Manager at the South East England Partnership Board, and its predecessor the Regional Assembly, he led on environmental policy in the South East Plan. He has also worked for the Environment Agency and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB).

Clare Reid MA (Cantab), MSc is an independent planning and environmental consultant. Between 2001 and 2010, she worked at the South West Regional Assembly, initially developing environmental and sustainability policies, then as Deputy Director leading work on the draft RSS and taking it through the Examination in Public (EiP). She previously worked at the Environment Agency and the RSPB.

Stefan Preuss Dipl.-Ing., MSc, PhD, MRTPI is Senior Town Planner at National Grid. Between 2006 and 2010 he coordinated the revision of the West Midlands RSS. Before that he carried out extensive academic research on the RPG/RSS system as well as comparative studies on regional planning in England and Germany.

CASE STUDY CONTRIBUTORS

Phil Jones BA (Hons), Dip TP, MRTPI is Strategic Planning Manager at Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council. During the last 14 years Phil has worked at national, pan-northern, regional, and local levels working for One North East, North East Assembly, and a number of local authorities in the North East and Yorkshire.

Ian Wray BSc, MPhil, MRTPI is Visiting Professor in the Department of Civic Design, School of Environmental Sciences, University of Liverpool. He was Chief Planner at Northwest Development Agency until September 2010. He managed the team that produced the North West's first Regional Planning Guidance in 1994.

Peter Williams BA (Hons), PhD, MIED, MRTPI works for East Midlands Councils on a range of planning and policy issues. From 2001 to 2010 he worked at the former East Midlands Regional Assembly, having responsibility for monitoring the East Midlands RSS. His previous experience was in local government and academia.

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This book is dedicated to all those who worked within the former regional spatial planning system: the strategic planners, the elected members, the civil servants, and all the various stakeholders. This system was rapidly disbanded after a change in national government in mid-2010, with very few formal transitional arrangements.

To avoid hard-won knowledge being lost, we organised a group of practitioners to record aspects of the work they did between 1998 and 2010. The intention was not to glorify the particular system of regional planning as it evolved over this period, but to assess objectively what worked well and what went wrong. All these authors have given their time freely for the good of the profession. We are grateful to Routledge and the RTPI for providing this opportunity to publish our reflections.

Planners are now working within a framework that encourages a voluntary and light-touch form of strategic planning. We have not sought to comment on these arrangements as they have been emerging during 2011, except in passing. Instead our primary purpose has been to draw out lessons for the longer term to assist future practitioners if, and we believe when, a formal system of strategic planning is reinvented.

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Many of the illustrations in this book are taken from Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) documents, or from background evidence, so as to give readers a feel for the inputs to and outputs from the process. Material from published RSSs, Scottish and Welsh Government publications, and government data series contain Crown copyright information which is reproduced under the terms of the Open Government Licence v.1.0: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence. This applies to Figures 2.2, 3.2–3, 4.1, 7.1, 8.2, and 9.5–6, and Table 3.1. We are grateful to the Welsh Government for its permission for Figure 9.5, and to the Scottish Government for Figure 9.6. Figure 3.1 has been adapted from data from the Office for National Statistics licensed under the Open Government Licence v.1.0.

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Corinne Swain, Tim Marshall, and Tony Baden
November 2011

ABBREVIATIONS

AMR	Annual Monitoring Report
ANEC	Association of North East Councils
BIS	Department of Business, Innovation and Science, established in 2009 by merging the Departments for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) and Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS)
CLG	Communities and Local Government. Still used in the name of the Select Committee, rather than DCLG, as the government department is now known
CO_2	carbon dioxide
DCLG	Department of Communities and Local Government, until 2010 referred to as Communities and Local Government (CLG). Formerly ODPM, prior to that the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR), and prior to that DETR
DECC	Department for Energy and Climate Change
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DETR	Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (1997–2001) replaced by Defra and DTLR (2001–2002)
DfT	Department for Transport, formerly part of DTLR and prior to that DETR
DOE	Department of the Environment, responsible for planning pre-1997
DTA	Directive territoriales d'aménagement (implementing instrument within a French regional spatial plan)
EA	Environment Agency
EiP	Examination in Public
emda	East Midlands Development Agency
EU	European Union
GDP	gross domestic product
GIS	Geographical Information System

GO	Government Office for the region
GO-East	Government Office for the East of England
GOSE	Government Office for the South East
GOSW	Government Office for the South West
GVA	gross value added
HA	Highways Agency
HMA	Housing Market Area
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment, often referred to as appropriate assessment
LDA	London Development Agency
LDEDC Act	Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009
LDF	Local Development Framework
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
LPA	local planning authority
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
LTP	Local Transport Plan
MKSM	Milton Keynes and South Midlands
MMS	Multi-Modal Studies (commissioned by DfT in the early 2000s)
NHPAU	National Housing and Planning Advisory Unit
NWDA	Northwest Development Agency
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2002–2006) taking on the non-transport responsibilities of the former DTLR and replaced by DCLG
PDL	previously developed land
PEM	Pre Examination Meeting
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance note
PPS	Planning Policy Statement
PSA	Public Service Agreement
PUSH	Partnership for Urban South Hampshire
RAWP	Regional Aggregates Working Party
RDA	Regional Development Agency
REPC	Regional Economic Planning Council, in operation throughout much of the 1960s and 1970s
RES	Regional Economic Strategy
RFA	Regional Funding Allocations, subsequently renamed Regional Funding Advice
RPB	Regional Planning Body
RPG	Regional Planning Guidance
RS	single or integrated regional strategy

RSS	Regional Spatial Strategy
RTAB	Regional Technical Advisory Body for waste
RTS	Regional Transport Strategy
SA	sustainability appraisal (incorporating SEA)
SDS	Spatial Development Strategy, term used in London
SEA	strategic environmental assessment
SEEDA	South East England Development Agency
SERPLAN	London and South East Regional Planning Conference
SNR	Sub-National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration 2007
SofS	Secretary of State
SRADT	Schéma régional d'aménagement et de développement du territoire (French regional spatial plan)
SSA	strategic sustainability assessment, used in preparing the South West RSS
STW	sewage treatment works
TCPA	Town and Country Planning Association
WRSE	Water Resources in the South East group

CONTENTS

List of figures xi
List of tables xiii
List of contributors xiv
Acknowledgements xvi
Abbreviations xix

1 Introduction **1**
CORINNE SWAIN, TIM MARSHALL, and TONY BADEN

Aims of this book 1
A brief history of English regional planning 2
The scope of regional spatial planning 5
Key challenges and drivers of strategic planning 6
Notes 8

2 Coalescing views around a strategy **9**
CATRIONA RIDDELL, former Director of Planning for the South East England Regional Assembly and the South East England Partnership Board

Introduction 9
A meeting of minds: the impact of governance arrangements 10
The rules of engagement in strategy development 13
Box 2.1 A region of contrast: the North East's experience, ***Phil Jones****, former Planning Manager at the North East Regional Assembly 14*
Wider public and stakeholder engagement 20
Box 2.2 Developing a sub-regionally based strategy in the South East 23
Reaching agreement on housing provision and distribution 25
Conclusions and lessons for the future 27
Notes 28

3 Spatial strategies for housing and the economy 31
ANDREW PRITCHARD, former manager of the Regional Planning Body function in the East Midlands

The economic context: 'time and tide wait for no man' 31
The challenge of housing growth: 'a tale of two reports' 35
The relationship between jobs and houses: 'carts, horses, chickens, and eggs' 40
Inter-regional relationships: 'what a carve-up!' 43
Relationship between Regional Spatial Strategy and Regional Economic Strategy: 'it takes two to tango' 46
Box 3.1 Strategic employment sites in the North West, ***Ian Wray****, former Chief Planner, Northwest Development Agency 48*
Lessons for the future: how to avoid 'throwing the baby out with the bathwater!' 50
Notes 51

4 Transport and the spatial strategy 54
CHRIS MARTIN, former Executive Director at the Yorkshire and Humber Assembly, and subsequently Deputy Chief Executive of Local Government Yorkshire and Humber

Introduction 54
Integrating transport and spatial strategies 55
Setting priorities for investment 63
Inter-regional linkages 67
Conclusions and lessons for the future 69
Notes 72

5 Longer-term environmental challenges 74
DAVID PAYNE, former Planning Manager at the South East England Regional Assembly and South East England Partnership Board, and CLARE REID, former Deputy Director at the South West Regional Assembly

Introduction 74
Cross-cutting issues 75
Box 5.1 Sustainable construction policies in South West England 76
Constraints and factors that influence the spatial strategy 78
Environmental infrastructure and resource management 82
Box 5.2 Mitigation strategy to offset development in the vicinity of the south east Dorset heathlands 83
Lessons and challenges 89
Notes 92

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