

The Future Spatial London Plan for London and beyond; proposed infrastructure crossing the Thames and planning reform

Account of Forum Zoom Meeting on 1st June 2020: Greater London 2020-45
Full minute by Drummond Robson at planninginlondon.com > LP&DF

The Forum held an excellent meeting during Lockdown which offered experienced professionals - used to realising development from properly considered plans - solutions to help London and the London Region out of its current dilemma of not having a workable plan to deliver.

The Policy Exchange's influential 2020 report by Jack Airey "Rethinking the Planning System for the 21st Century" is coincidentally the perfect policy for the spatial plans of London 2020 set out in this article. The key recommended reform (on page 10) is

"As well as ending systematic land use control of individual plots, the Government should radically reform the structure and objectives of local plans... Local plans should set a limited and simple set of development control rules detailing what development is not acceptable in development zones and a similar set of rules detailing what development is acceptable in non-development zones – a framework for administering planning applications that allows developers to respond to



market conditions and innovate in the places where new development is suitable."

Presciently inspired by a Forum Meeting held at TCPA in Carlton House Terrace on 3 December

2019 and The Planning Inspectorate's critical report of the Draft London Plan, Drummond Robson and Gary Young have worked over the last 6 months (perhaps with fewer distractions than in more workaday times) to offer a way of reconciling London's need for growth and accommodating planned population forecasts with how to make it happen.

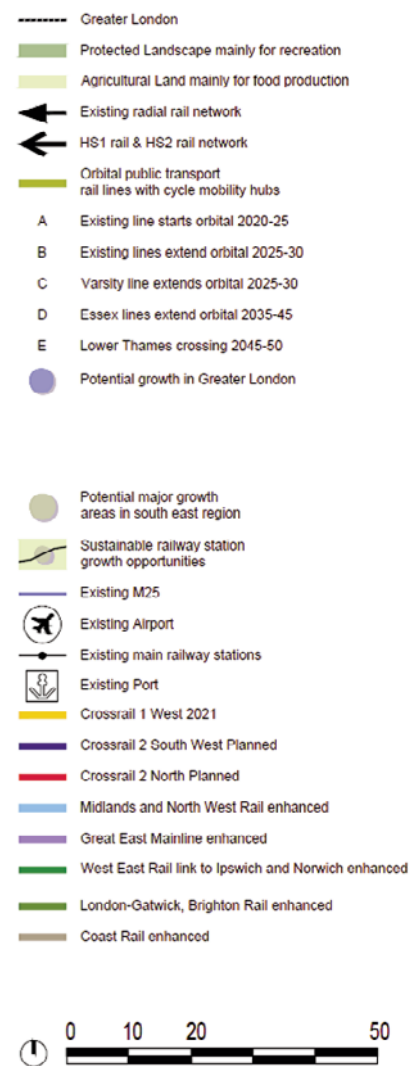
However this enabled the original diagrammatic intentions to be developed in more detail into a genuine spatial plan with true spatial relationships with meaningful sizes, spaces, and relationships between places. Awareness of Safe Distancing and its many implication added a new impetus to this. To do this it became clear that some specific engineering would be needed – especially in the Thames Corridor and adjoining counties of Kent and Essex in the Environment Agency's 2100 Policy Area – so Mark Willingale of Metrotidal Ltd provided added workable practicalities to combine with the emerging planning framework.

The perspective of the pandemic was also an

Meeting held on Monday 1st June on Zoom

Brian Waters, BWCP architects: Chairman
Professor Tony Travers: Department of Government and Director of LSE
Jonathan Manns, Rockwell Properties vice- chairman
Drummond Robson: Honorary Secretary of the Forum
Gary Young: Place 54 Architects
Mark Willingale: Architect and Metrotidal Ltd
David Cook: Architect and Metrotidal Ltd
Andy Rogers: Association of Consultant Architects

Janice Morphet: UCL, Bartlett
Nigel Moor
Brian Whiteley: Planning Advisor, Planning Aid England,
Royal Town Planning Institute
Duncan Bowie:
Peter Eversden: London Forum
Adrian Cole: Steer Group
Max Farrell: London Collective
Philip Smith: Board Director and Chris Peachey: Land Use Consultants



GREATER LONDON 2020

EXISTING RAIL ACCESS PROVIDING POTENTIAL FOR GROWTH

www.place54architects.com

influence against planning higher densities for their own sake – (will more of us work from home in future?)

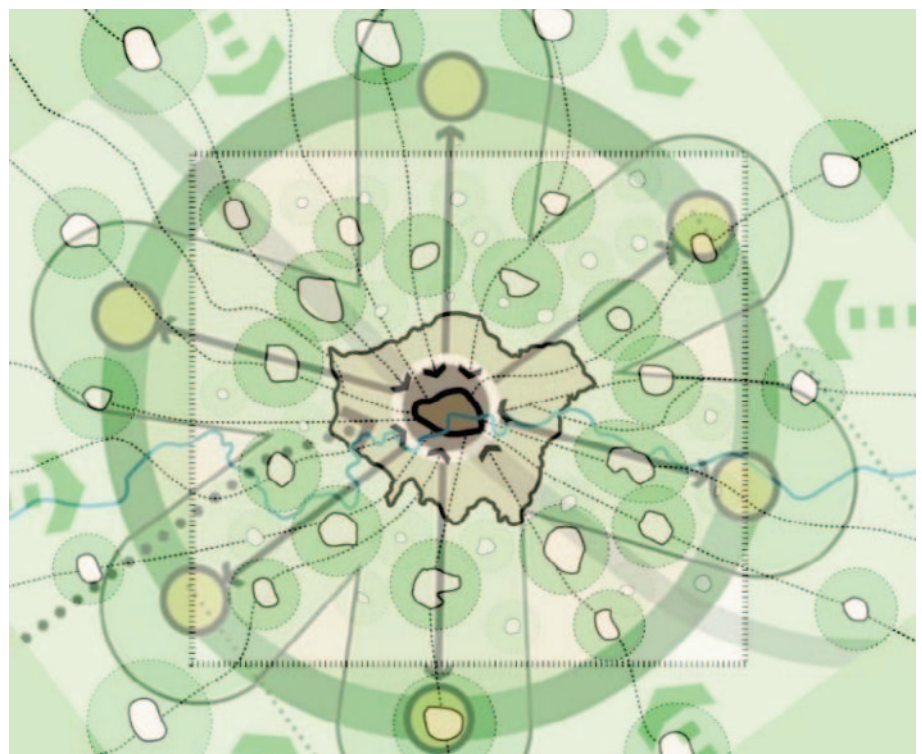
DISCUSSION TOPICS

Deliverable Planning: The Future Spatial London Plan for London and beyond. Presentations by Gary Young, Drummond Robson and Mark Willingale

Gary Young, founding Director of Place 54 Architects, took us through the London 2020-45 plans and how the image ABOVE had evolved as a plan based design.

An earlier simple diagram was produced for a Market Garden City proposal derived from the ideas for Ebenezer Howard’s Garden City plan. This diagram RIGHT explained the radial framework of London Region’s infrastructure with green areas for food production supported by an additional outer orbital link.

Historically there have been many ideas with the intention of planning the wider area outside London as variously defined; some have been suc-



>>>

cessful.

Since the 1960s professional planners and others have explored how London should maintain and develop its importance or its World City Status. Many were more latterly concerned by the impact of expanding Green Belt policy ever further and the absence of realistic Regional Planning. Peter Hall in *World Cities* in 1963 and Terry Farrell in AR's "A Manifesto for London" were perhaps two of the most notable and considered from which the images RIGHT derive. Both worth reading if you can find copies.

By February 2020 the emerging plan elements from Gary's diagram were beginning to acknowledge various effective plans for London since 1943. These are examined more by Drummond Robson whose presentation followed Gary's out of their earlier collaboration.

In March 2020 a draft of Greater London 2020 plan was progressed by Place54architects to include a map with a full orbital for green transport of railway with connected cycling hubs. These were under current pressures for lower carbon emissions and cycling fitness efficiency.

The orbital route was indicative, but was informed by the London Plan's infrastructure priorities and associated source material.

It was then built up from a sequence of existing orbital rail lines which were joined up with existing mainly radial rail networks.

The new orbital idea has clear parallels with the progressive stages of Orbirail proposed by Sir Peter Hall and Drummond Robson which became The Overground

The plan served as an exploration of where rail accessibility was highest and therefore gave potential for sustainable housing and employment growth, subject to true environmental sensitivities:

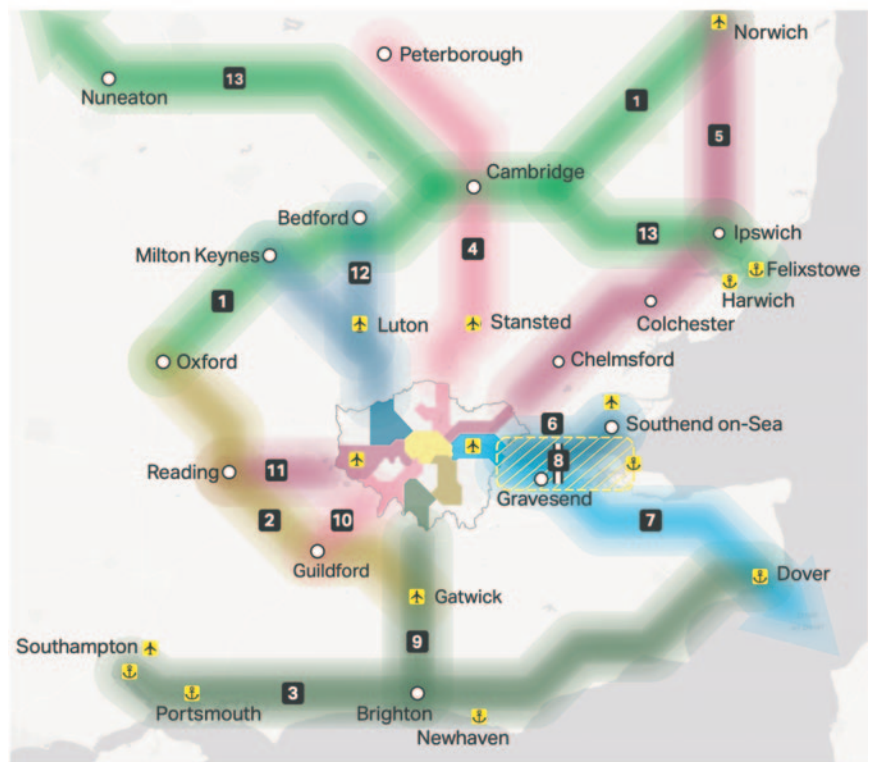
The dark green areas are National Parks and AONB and light green best agricultural land. These colours follow through into the final Greater London 2020 plan.

The plans are underpinned by knowledge of the region's geology, topography, soil quality and water catchments.

The large map FAR RIGHT is DEFRA geology and shows how this informs the region. The purple shows the chalk aquifers forming the uplands of Chilterns to the north of London, and south of the



Figure 2.15 - Wider South East – 13 Initial Strategic Infrastructure Priorities



Thames the North Downs, South Downs. It also maps the National Parks and AONB

DEFRA's Magic Maps <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx> provide the largest data base and map base from which to consider Land Use and classified agricultural land quality as well as a wide range of other Greater London 2020 scheme considerations.

The more generalised version which Gary used indicates the higher quality agricultural land north east of the Capital. It has a majority of grade 3 green and significant amount of grade 2 blue. Land in yellow reflects uplands. (In practical terms

the true planning arbiter of what needs safeguarding is between categories 3a and 3b, which still rely on investigations by Dudley Stamp in the 1950s), as the detailed extract plan shows. It also indicates the effect of water on lower lying East Anglian soils.

The river catchment plan OVERPAGE includes the upper parts of rivers draining upland away from the centre as well as the Thames.

The base of the map is the existing rail network with:

Planned Crossrail, and main line enhancements, relate to the traditional predominantly

LONDON OVERGROUND

DEVELOPMENT IN STAGES 2007-2015



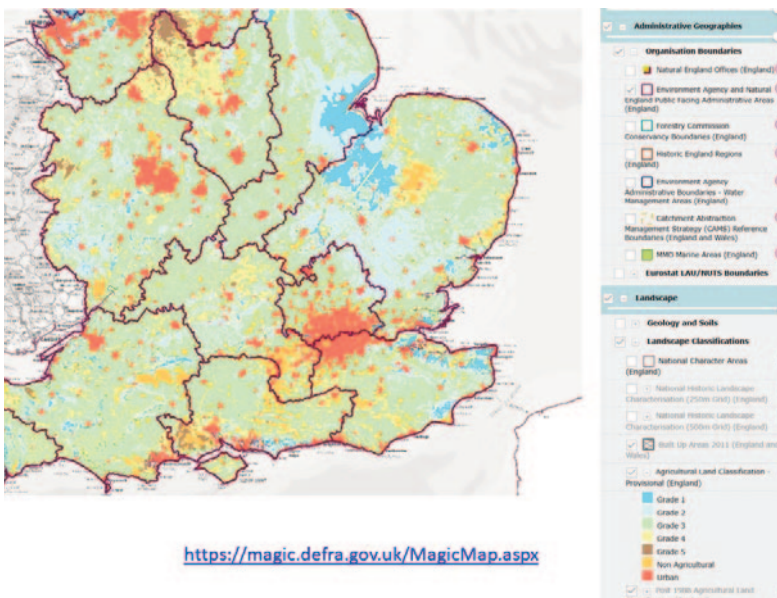
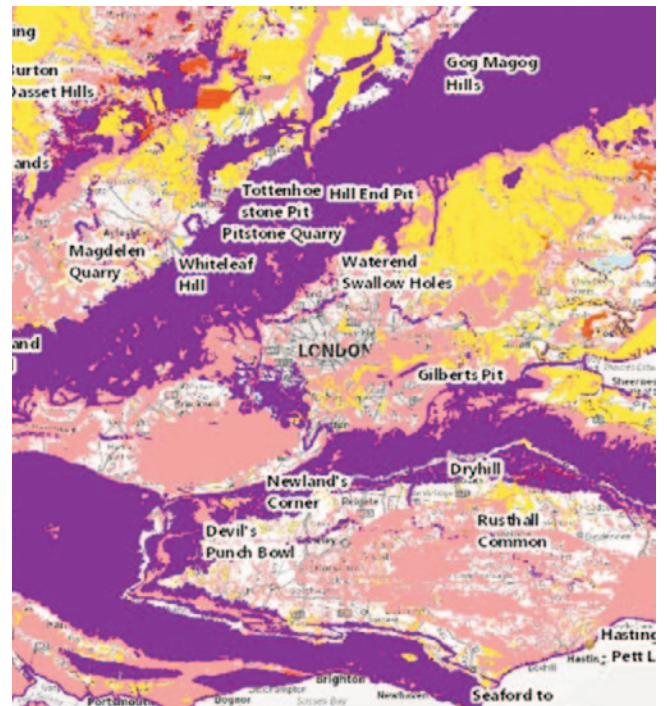
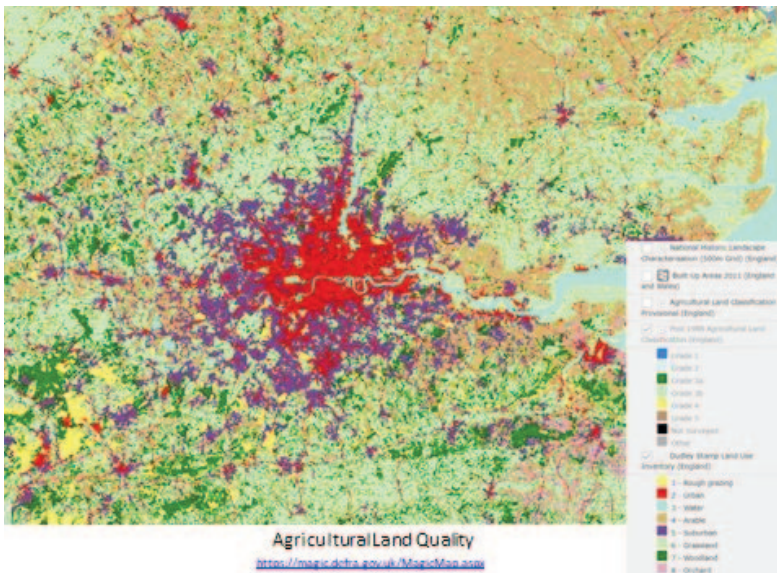
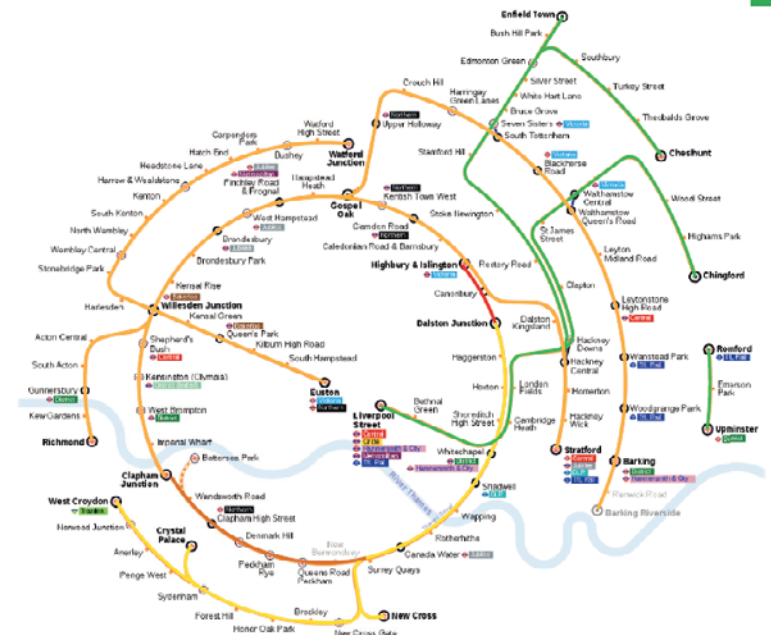
radial routes except the south coast rail.

Strings attached to partial orbitals suggested we worked with the existing rail network, as The London Overground has done. This should advantage London as well as communities outside the London Plan.

The grey circles are settlement: towns and villages

Initial strategic infrastructure proposals from the draft London Plan (LEFT BELOW) appears to respond to the business case to invest in radial commuting to London.

The Metropolitan green belt overlaid on the



plan shows how this large protective area cuts across the radial rail network, inhibits growth in both radial and orbital patterns. This does, however, leave opportunity for a public transport orbital beyond the green belt. (Drummond discusses green belt issues and the proposed review in the next part). A substantially modified approach to protecting true countryside forms part of Greater London 2020-45.

Overlying National Parks and AONB and demonstrate that the previous slides green belt in landscape terms is arbitrary. The Green Belt reflects local issues and does not reflect statutory

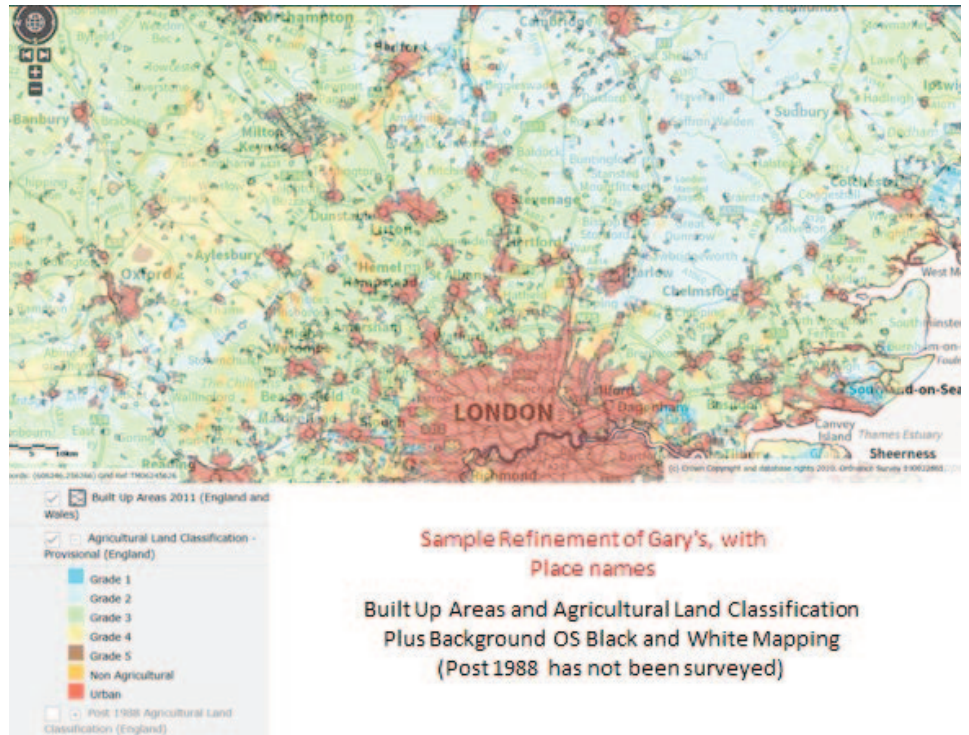
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>>> valued landscapes which include the darker green shaped by the geology.

The Greater London 2020-45 plan proposes a more meaningful relationship between the towns and villages and their local landscape. The plan avoids a green belt around London and defines designated Parkland landscapes for recreation and best quality farmland for food production. The proposal includes for each town or village location which is rail accessible to provide some growth for housing and employment, which is sustainable.

The success of a plan is to make it deliverable in phases, therefore diagrams explain orbital rail can be built up in components:

The next plans show the orbital rail components in more detail, related to development growth as indicated on the successive phases and where possible using existing rail corridors and lines (as The Overground did).



These are listed below with indicative sequencing and programming:

The plans show the orbital rail components in more detail

●A. West arc linking from Reading, Oxford and

Bicester using existing surface rail 2020.

●B. Rail enhancements to existing lines linking Bicester to Milton Keynes and Reading to Gatwick and Kent 2020-2030.

●C. The north east arc linking infrastructure and growth potential for Cambridge to Oxford 2030-35.

●D. The eastern part of the orbital in Essex needs the most exploration, using existing rail or more direct new routes 2030-2035.

●E. Proposed Thames crossing opens up the link between Kent and Essex with advanced flood relief measures 2040 -45. (This is explored further by Mark Willingale)

Note we have made adjustments to the plan already 2045-50 or related to advance flood relief measures.

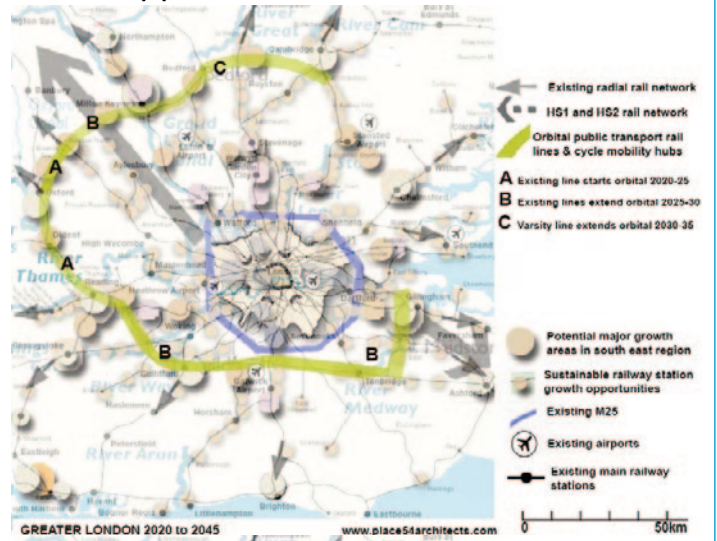
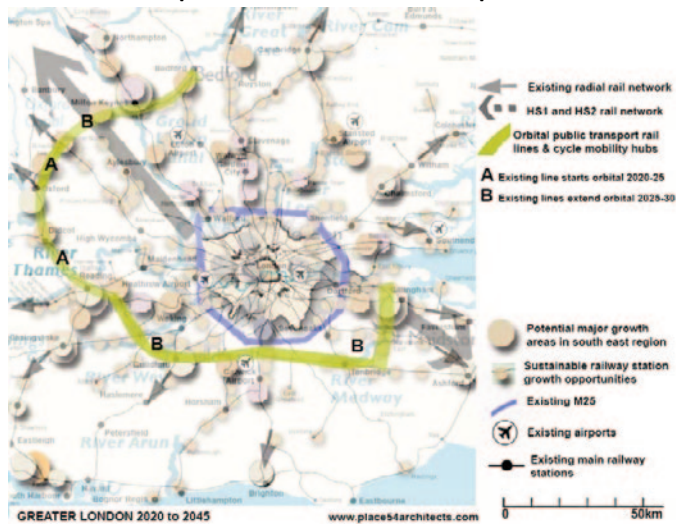
GREATER LONDON 2020 to 2045

Gary adds that the idea of a plan is to enable many people to make contributions, and allow discussions and debate. The illustration is adapted from an idea created by Terry Farrell for London Thames Gateway, itself developed from the Peter Hall's work *The World Cities* in 1966 (see also Farrell's frontispiece from a *Manifesto for London* above).

Drummond Robson explained the thinking behind the plans. The Forum has, like many others, been troubled by the direction the draft London Plan has followed and its progressive divergence from a plan people can work to, to ever greater populist "stand up and cheer" statements lacking enduring worth for anyone wanting to make it actually happen over a period of time, so the



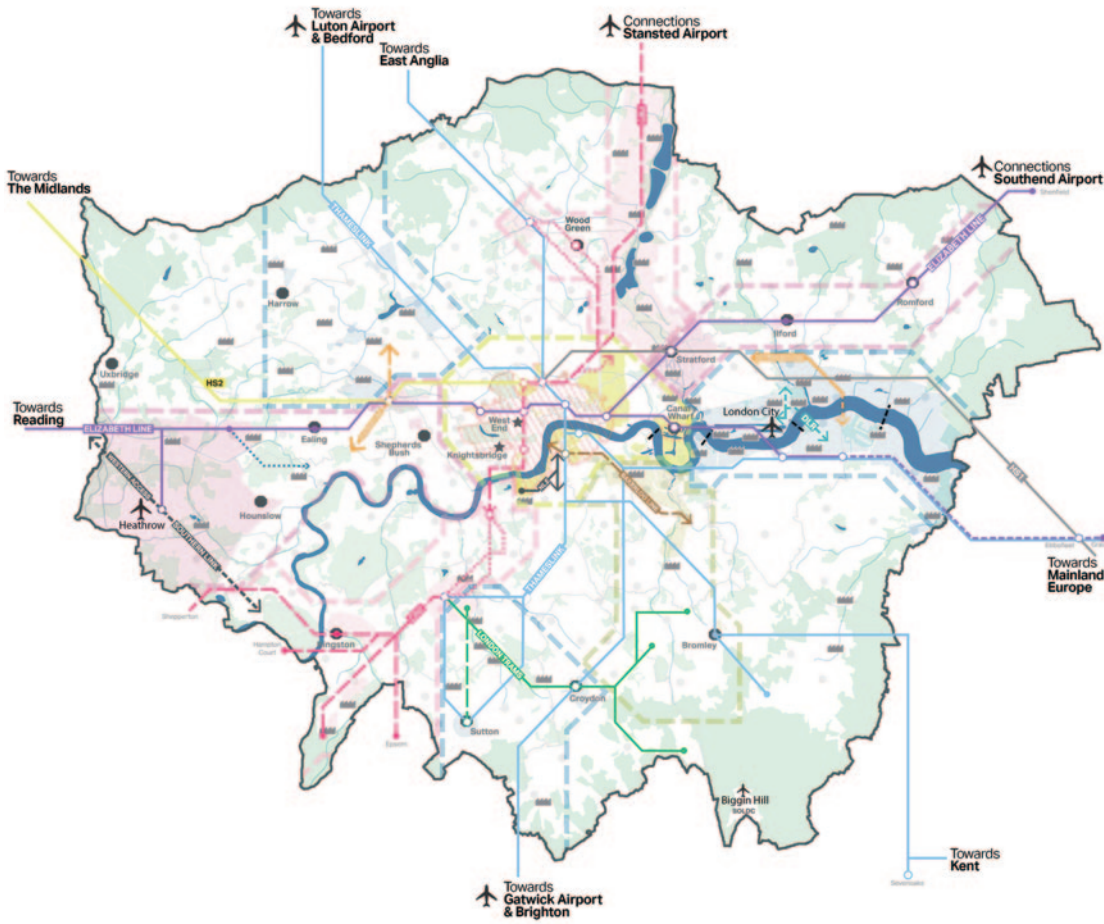
Green transport infrastructure provides for regions to support Greater London 2020 to 2045



Orbital green transport rail, bus & cycle mobility hubs with Thames crossing & flood barrier



The London Plan Key Diagram



The Key Diagram brings together the main components of the Mayor's Spatial Strategy for London - see chapter 2 Draft London Plan Mayor of London December 2017

- OAs Central London
- OAs Elizabeth Line East and West
- OAs Crossrail 2 North and South
- OAs London Trams
- OAs Bakerloo Line Ext
- OAs Thameslink/HS2
- OAs Thames Gateway
- Central Activities Zone & Northern Isle of Dogs
- Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land
- Elizabeth Line
- Crossrail 2
- Thameslink
- HS1
- HS2
- Northern line extension
- Bakerloo line extension
- London Trams
- London Overground extensions
- DLR extension
- Potential or proposed Thames crossings
- Stations
- Key interchange stations
- ★ International town centres
- Metropolitan town centres
- Other town centres
- Strategic Industrial Location
- Strategic Outer London Development Centre

Source: GLA Planning December 2017

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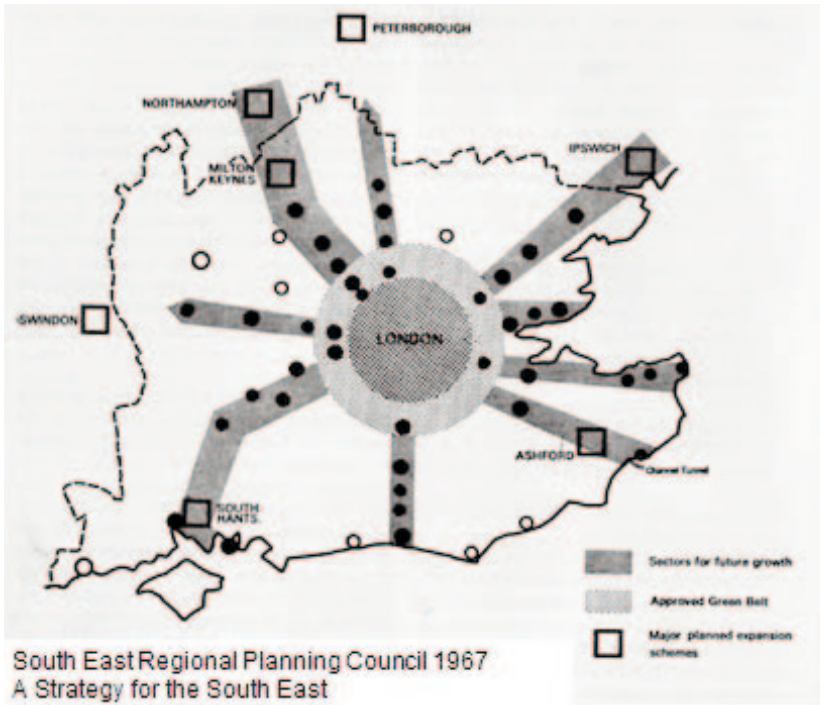
emphasis, (after the sadness of informed responses to the draft London Plan) has been on plans that were followed or provided a proper framework for clear collaborative effort by public and private sectors.

Aecom, the major infrastructure consultancy prepared a regional manifesto called *London 2065* which puts it starkly, based on global experience: "To build the missing million homes we need a blend of solutions to be established which reinforce the quality of the places within and around London, creating communities that meet the needs of society and the economy of tomorrow."

Two underlying weaknesses which have emasculated much of planning's effectiveness were set out by Chris Shepley, former Chief Planning Inspector when giving evidence to the House of Lords on Thursday 3rd December 2015

In summary these are the absence of effective regional planning and the so-called "Duty to Co-operate" which expects local authorities in competition with one another for resources and assets to work with one another rather than maximise the advantages they do have in their own areas.

The same Chris Shepley is also prin-



Principal author of *Groton Revisited... Planning in Crisis?*: a classic example of the supremely humorous planner writing a great satire adding weight from practical experience to what he was to articulate to the House of Lords some five years later

A simple local example of the absence of a regional structure and the duty to co-operate not

working is to be found in the aspirations for Watling Chase Community Forest which has been superimposed on an area largely of Green Belt without effective and imposed duty from a higher authority to co-operate.

It was set up in 1991 and intended to be 'a rich mosaic of landscape, within which land uses



Countryside

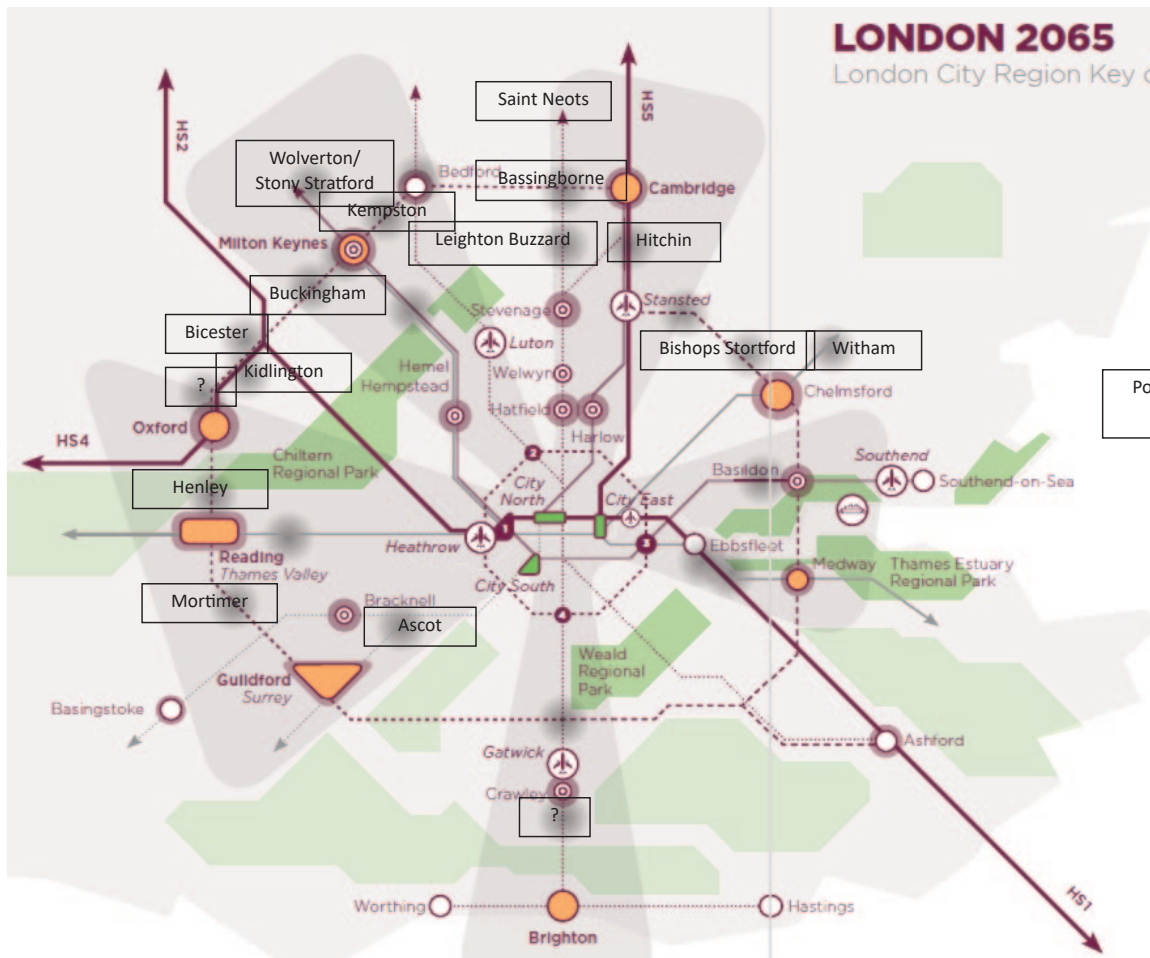
- A Public and Private Shared Compromise.
- To be seen but largely inaccessible.
- Managed and Husbanded by Various Specialists

"The public access to the land is essential unless the national 'right of way' is demonstrably more expeditiously 'the right to roam'



include farmland, woodland, villages, leisure enterprises, nature areas and public open space should be created.'

The hope is a long way from being realised with schemes being undertaken by separate local authorities working to different objectives over different timescales and to different masters and



>>> unexpected voting audiences, as Grotton shows when revisited.

The Planning Inspectorate reduced the Draft London Plan's housing forecasts as unrealistic by 20 per cent to 522,870 over 10 years. MHCLG supports this assessment.

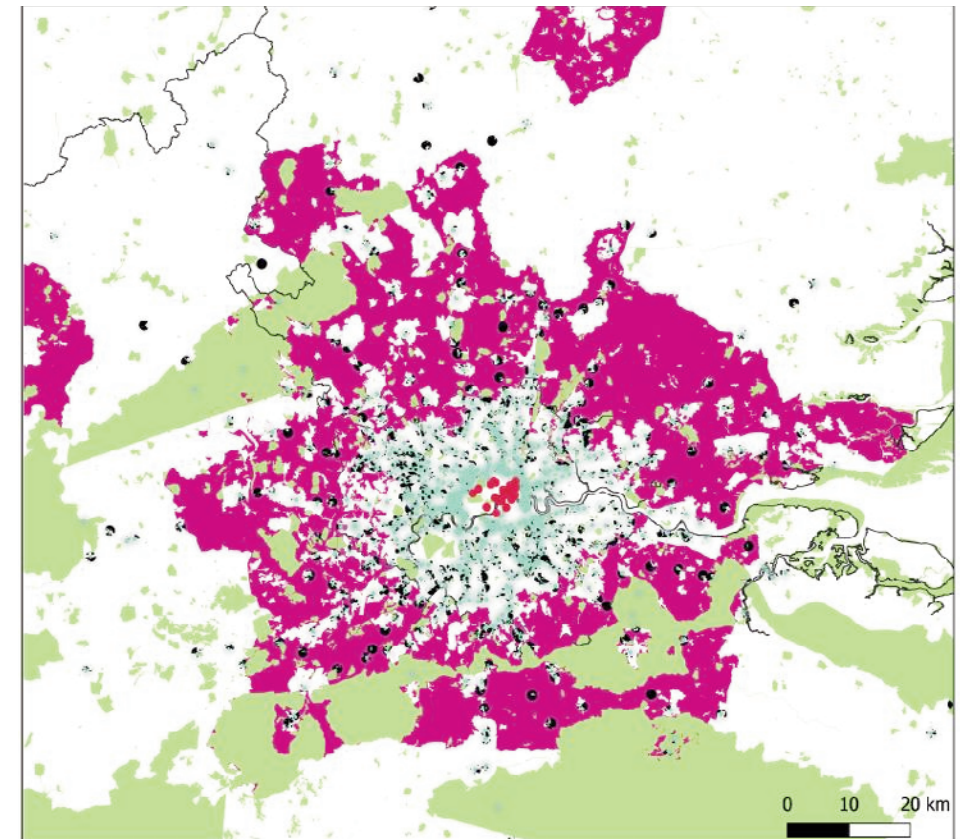
The Spatial Strategy is unaltered leaving all London housing schemes a matter of uncertain negotiation until the Regional Green Belt is reviewed as the Inspectorate concludes.

This will take long years of further inter-Council negotiation. It is no workable plan for London and its wider region.

As indicated above, London 2020 learns from the Pressing Needs of History - Notably

- Abercrombie's Plans for Post War London
- The New Towns Realised in Post War Britain
- The Regional Plans such as the simple and effective South East Regional Planning Council 1967, A Strategy for the South East and more recently the Infrastructure Proposals of
- London 2065 by Aecom and *Where to Build Outside London*, and
- Homes on the Right Track* by Centre For Cities

Arthur Ling's Eggs BELOW formed part of the County of London Plan and shows the effective separation of West End communities by parkland and inner suburban communities by limited green



- Potentially buildable land
- Entry stations
- London commuter stations
- Green Belt allocations
- Land with recorded marker of public benefit

spaces.

Further out beyond the Greater London Area shows the dominant influence of the Green Belt in constraining London's growth and being unable to meet the Capital's need to grow and provide more homes.

As the Planning Inspectorate advisers have

said there needs to be a proper review of the Green Belt. The approach of this account is intended to facilitate this more quickly than they suggest. The views already expressed by MHCLG tend to support this which would also help the forthcoming summer review of the planning system to endorse it.

The Green Belt is not a synonym for the Countryside as simple visits to the places that you can get to in it show.

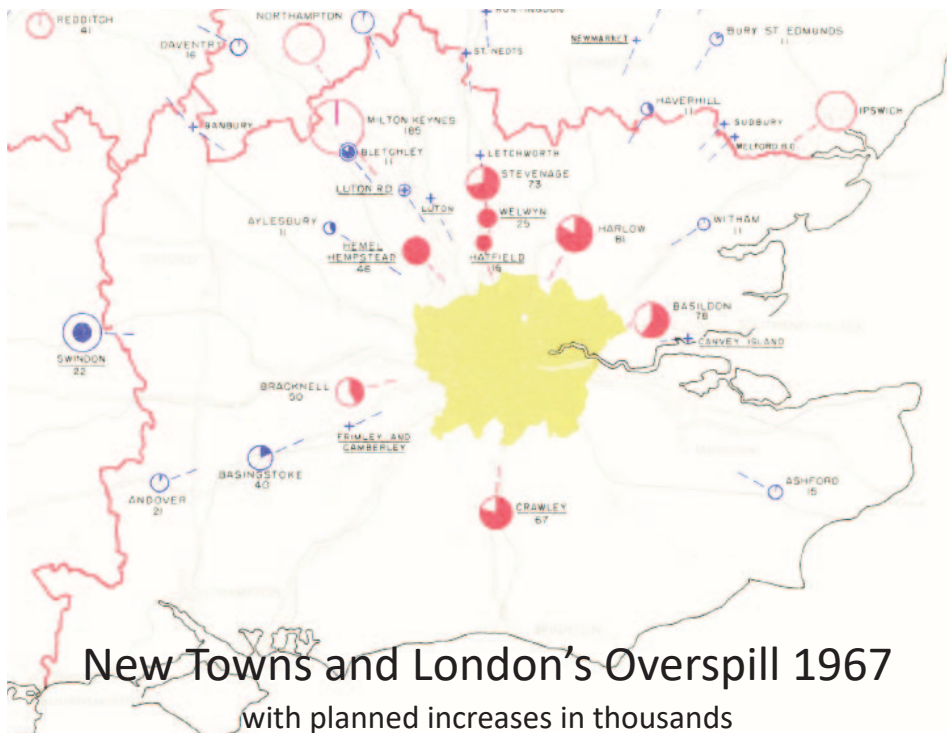
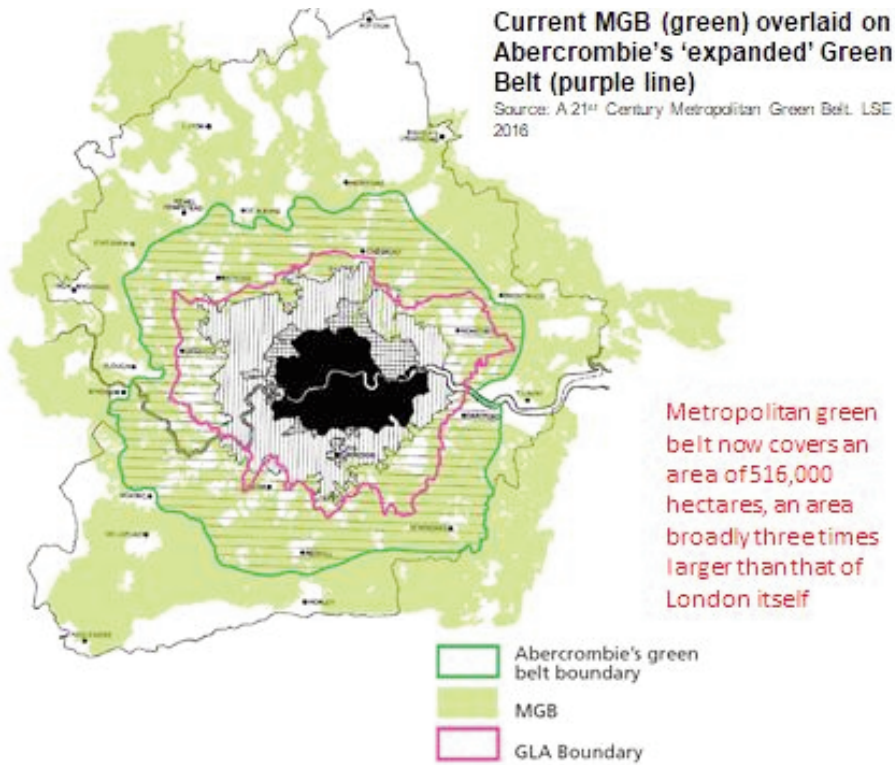
Within London the Green Belt idea:

- Provides many places for recreation* for many people – often of very high quality and diversity (E.g. Regent's Park, Kew, Hampstead Heath and the London Wetlands Centre)
- *Including Parks, Gardens, Sport
- Are very accessible by Public and Public Transport
- Some Car Parking is Provided
- Limited Places for Food Production - Farming Market Gardening or Agriculture
- Little Significant Managed Woodland
- In London, Green Belts and MOL are very small compared with areas Outside the GLA area, yet they work perfectly well

The Green Belt is however not the countryside though many wish to encourage these areas as synonymous. The present pandemic has, in emphasising our sensitivity to local distancing,



Lings Eggs: Arthur Ling, County of London Plan 1943
An era of Community and Civic Pride. Now Places to "Do your Own Thing"



taught us to differentiate the reality of different kinds of outdoor spaces more finely, rather as Ling and Abercrombie saw in 1943. It would be nice to think it reinstates proper senses of civic pride and community.

The planned new towns and expanded towns of the post war era and into the 1970s had exactly the same ambition as we now propose to relieve pressures on the diminished housing stock of London and provide new settlements which were much more than housing estates, giving



employment, recreation and amenity after the privations of 1939-1945.

The principal growth areas were supervised by Development Corporations set up by the then Ministry of Housing and Local Government and administered by civil servants and both internal and external planning, design and other advisers based in premises in Caxton Street, Whitehall.

The largest of the later generation schemes was the ambitious settlement intended for 250,000 people at Milton Keynes, chosen from many alternatives by civil servants. After extensive preparation funded by central government the result, like the others, became very profitable as the resulting New Towns Commission, and the current Council, have found.

The scheme was designated after a four day public inquiry held in Wilton Hall Bletchley. Crucially the designation defined the boundaries of the proposed City without wider dispute which offered a certainty to its development as well as speed in carrying it out.

TCPA says:

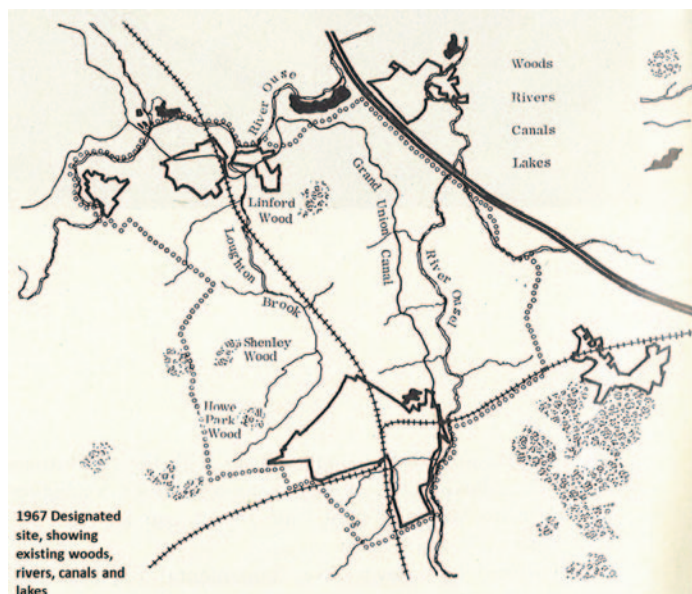
- The sites for many of the post-war New Towns were identified using a local-authority-led process.
- The New Towns programme was a profitable long-term investment for HM Treasury and continues to this day to provide income for the Government.
- The New Towns programme created homes for a current population of over 2.8 million people and was driven by a scale of ambition for good place-making that has not been rivalled since. Central government played an essential role in enabling this process.
- The financial model used to build Garden Cities created an income which could pay for their upkeep in perpetuity. This financial model was not applied to the New Towns, and now many are run-down and in need of considerable investment.

TCPA:

- The existing New Towns have a legacy of generous community assets such as green space, but for the most part stewardship and funding mechanisms were not put in place to look after them.
- The Homes and Communities Agency still owns significant amounts of land in the New Towns which could be used to help fund their renewal.

>>>

RIGHT:
Designated
site for Milton Keynes
new town



- >>> ● Local authorities also own large areas of land in and around the New Towns which could be used to generate income.

Lessons for Delivering a New Generation of Garden Cities

Who was responsible for building the New Towns?

New Towns were built by public Development Corporations directly financed by a combination of HM Treasury loans, budgets from other agencies (such as highways and health authorities) and the per capita budgets for local government services (for example schools). The powers and remit of New Town Development Corporations were set out in the New Towns Act 1946. Once a site had been designated, the Development Corporation acted as the 'engine' of the New Towns approach. The success of the New Town Development Corporations was directly related to their ability to deploy the following core powers:

- the power to compulsorily purchase land if it could not be bought by voluntary agreement;
- the power to buy land at current-use value (later, after the Myers legal ruling, some 'hope value' also had to be paid) and capture the betterment for HM Treasury (and thus, ultimately, the public);
- the power to borrow money (initially primarily from HM Treasury but later in the programme from other sources as necessary), repayable with interest;
- the power to prepare a masterplan which, after public inquiry and approval by the Minister, would be the statutory development plan;
- the power to grant or refuse planning permission for development within the New Town designated area (with certain small exceptions, such as advertisements, although local 'partnership' agreements sometimes extended that range so long as they helped in the mission to deliver the New Town);
- the power to procure housing subsidised by central government grant and by other means, and to act as a housing association in the management of housing; and
- the power to do anything necessary for the development of the town, such as providing cash flow for the delivery of utilities or entering into partnership working with other agencies, invest-

ing in social and community development, promoting economic development, marketing the New Town in the UK and overseas, etc.

'Hope value' is the value of a piece of land over and above the value created by any existing planning permission, derived from the hope that development will be permitted in future. The Myers case (Myers v Milton Keynes Development Corporation [1974] All ER 1096) over compulsory purchase in Milton Keynes illustrates the complexity inherent in trying to work out what land would have been worth had there been no New Town designation and what sensible planning assumptions could otherwise be applied

The New Town Development Corporations were able to create places quickly, but at a cost: Having the money and the remit to do 'everything necessary' to deliver the town (within a 'pro-growth' culture) meant that the Development Corporations could create New Towns very quickly.

The research suggests that the creation of new Garden Cities requires an organisation which:

- is committed to the long-term project of building a new community (30 years or more);
- has planning and plan-making powers;
- commits to implementing all the Garden City principles at the outset and aims to make financial and governance arrangements for stewardship in perpetuity (even though the means to do so may evolve over time);
- establishes a masterplan with a strong vision and structure but which provides the flexibility for the place to evolve over time;
- has the power to do 'everything necessary to deliver the town', including powers on planning and compulsory purchase and social and economic development;
- enables existing authorities to feel actively engaged in the development of the town;

- allows for meaningful public engagement throughout the development process;
- has sufficient resources to ensure that quality is not sacrificed in order to deliver at speed; and
- prepares the relevant local authority/ies to take on the Garden City once it has been built and to sustain its ambitions.

There are perhaps three main forms of 'delivery body' that might be considered for creating Garden Cities today. These are discussed below.

Private-sector/local authority partnerships

With the exception of places like Ebbsfleet, which is being delivered by an Urban Development Corporation (more on this below), the majority of large-scale developments currently in planning are being delivered by the private sector, with the involvement, encouragement and sometimes limited participation of the local authority.

There are important exceptions to this, such as the sites at Bicester and Northstowe, where the local authority is taking a more significant lead.

There are currently a very limited number of proposals for more than 10,000 housing units in the planning process, and none on the scale of the developments in the post-war New Towns programme.

The benefits of a local authority led scheme are that a democratically elected body is accountable, transparent and represents the public interest which it ought to safeguard. However, it is clear that if a new Garden City of, say, 15,000-20,000 homes is to be built the Government will have to take the lead and underwrite the main risk. Private capital and expertise will then follow.

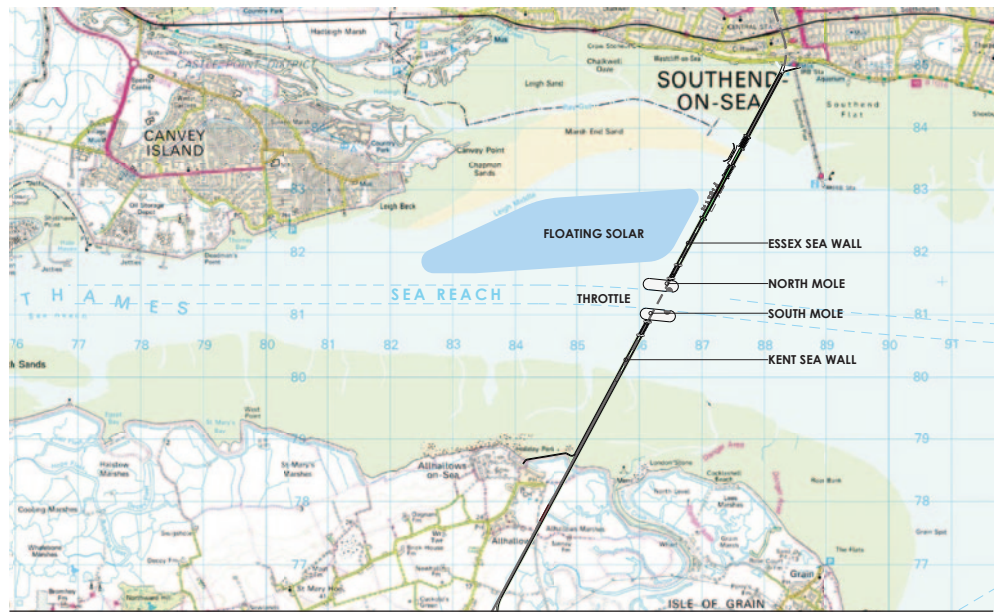
How were the New Towns paid for?

New Towns were financed by a combination of 60-year, fixed-rate loans from central government, budgets from other agencies (such as high-

SEA REACH LINK

SEA REACH THROTTLE, TUNNEL, RAIL ORBITAL AND FLOATING SOLAR:

RIGHT:
key summary image
by Metrotidal Ltd



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ways and health authorities) and the per-capita budgets for local government services (for example for schools). Initially, the New Town Development Corporations were allowed to borrow only from HM Treasury. In the early stages, land was bought by the Development Corporation at near existing-use values (which were, in the main, agricultural price levels, fixed at current prices), which provided the New Towns with the financial wherewithal for subsequent development. Infrastructure such as roads and parks had to be built in advance of population growth and demand, and thus before any increase in local tax receipts.

New Town construction therefore required significant investment over a considerable period of time. As the New Towns progressed, the Development Corporations sold freeholds, as well as acquiring land. Land for schools and hospitals, for example, was sold to the relevant authorities or given away for free. Open space was typically given with an endowment, either to the local authority or to some other not-for-profit body, in perpetuity.

The financing of housing built for rent in the New Towns operated in a way similar to that applying to local authorities, with central government providing subsidies to the Development Corporations. In terms of revenue, New Town housing activities evolved over time alongside central government's changing housing policy. Each of the New Towns built up very large housing revenue accounts, which, with inflation on the one hand and controls on rents on the other, required very large sums to be written off by central government.

In later years, revenue was raised by selling housing for owner-occupation through the 'Right to Buy' legislation, by selling land for housing for sale or self-build, and by disposing of land to housing associations to deliver housing for rent or shared ownership.

It is important to note that the New Town Development Corporations did not finance all aspects of the town's development. HM Treasury loans were supplemented by funds from the relevant existing public sector programmes in the area, refocused towards the New Town (to pay for key facilities such as schools, hospitals and some utilities such as water infrastructure), and by

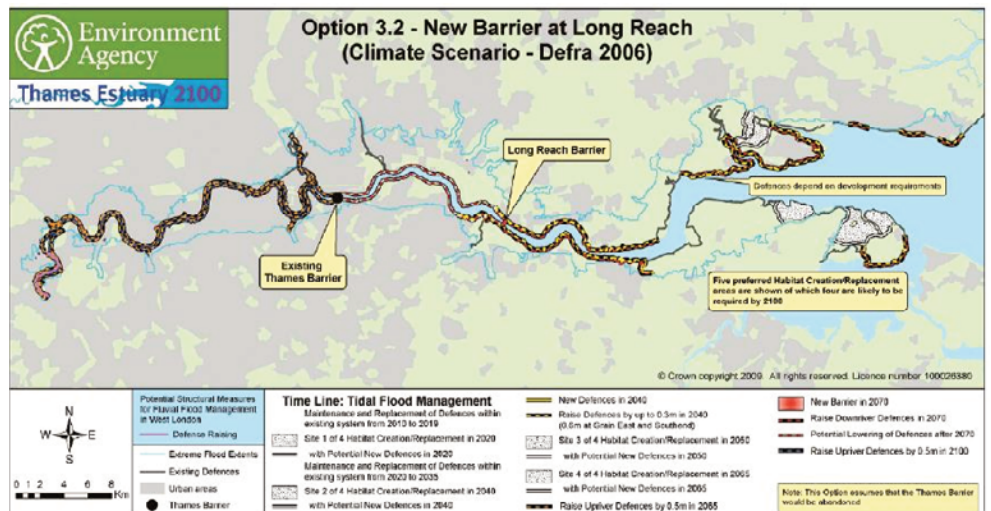


Figure 2.2: TE2100 Option 3.2 – New barrier at Long Reach

Source: Environment Agency TE2100 Plan

attracting inward investment from the private sector.

The first generation of New Towns proved so financially successful that, assisted by relatively low interest on the loans to the Development Corporations (set at a rate of 2% above Libor), they were net lenders to other public bodies. For example, Harlow repaid all its loans within 15 years and started to produce a surplus for HM Treasury.

However, the cost of borrowing was a major financial burden for the 'Mark Three' New Towns during the 1970s and 1980s, when interest rates rose dramatically, up to 16%. In addition, the forced sale of Development Corporation commercial assets (both mature and immature) from 1981 onwards removed income growth from this source.

Recommendations

- Land value capture remains an essential component of financing new communities. Relevant legislation should be modernised to maximise opportunities for land value capture in new Garden Cities. The New Towns Act and the Compensation Code should be updated to provide better opportunities to capture land values when building Garden Cities.

- The Government should provide political certainty to de-risk private investment. The development of new communities takes time, and the build-out phase must be resilient in the face of changing economic climates and political cycles. HM Treasury has a crucial role to play in providing the level of economic certainty needed to help de-risk private sector investment. Furthermore, new Garden Cities can be profitable for the >>>

>>> Government if a long-term, patient approach is taken.

• **HM Treasury should consider removing housing development from the public sector net cash requirement. The current approach makes investment in housing a contribution towards the national debt, when in fact it is a long-term investment.**

• **There is an important role for private sector investment in new Garden Cities – but not at the expense of implementing the Garden City principles (on quality and social justice, for example).**

• Garden City Development Corporations must make a commitment to the Garden City principles in their constitution. It is not enough to rely on the philanthropy and good will of those running new Garden City Development Corporations. Legislative change will be necessary to ensure that such a commitment is made.

• Local authorities should explore options for generating income through the re-municipalisation of activities such as energy generation and supply or the proactive management of a community asset portfolio. The TCPA is exploring the options for financing new Garden Cities, including through municipal energy companies.

Proposed infrastructure crossing the Thames by Metrotidal

Probably the most far reaching element of this collective presentation is the proposed infrastructure crossing the Thames, (and associated in particular with flood relief measures but also new development land) which was presented by **Mark Willingale** of Metrotidal Limited, following his more detailed investigations of this part of the regional plan for Greater London 2020.

The integrated infrastructure lowers the cost of each component and increases the overall benefits, notably economic and other, which this would bring, as Mark showed. It also results in some changes to the overall plan, London 2020.

The image on the previous page: 'key summary image' summarises the idea. Further images RIGHT amplified the implications, reinforcing the Environment Agency's plan for 2020 which may not require the Long Reach Barrier: Mark identifies in more detail many of the advantages of the metrotidal sea reach link.

The integrated infrastructure Sea Reach link between Allhallows-on-Sea and Southend-on-Sea has the following advantages over landward links further west: -

1 Best flood defence system

- shortest flood defence line
- lowest flood defence datum
- greatest landward area of flood protection
- highest flood resilience for longest duration (TE2200)

2 Most powerful rail orbitals

- single link completes the Thames and London R25 Orbitals
- best geographical spread of orbital stations
- best orbital-radial station connections
- serves current plans for 100,000 new homes beyond M25
- serves key recreation areas; Southend, Hoo Peninsula, Medway Towns
- serves Thamesport and Southend Airport
- makes best use of existing and former railway lines

3 Generates green-growth

- rail and micro-mobility led transport
- floating solar array generates energy for 100,000 new homes
- tidal cooling for efficient data storage
- rail wayleaves for FTTP data distribution

4 Most economic benefits

- integrated infrastructure saves costs
- best cost/benefit ratio
- widest connectivity and agglomeration benefits

5 Least environmental impact

- protects the largest area of estuary habitat from rising sea levels
- shortest new railway lines required on land
- least terrestrial impacts
- least third party impacts

6 Complements the Medway system

- same rail line across the Hoo for the Medway system
- main part of the coastal route between Southend and Sittingbourne

Collectively the three presentations indicate how a clear and strong framework starting imminently can result in a long term strategy which can, like the Abercrombie and South East Regional Strategy, bring forward strong collaboration between public and private sectors in its realisation under clear MHCLG direction and with a wide diversity of stakeholders.

Duncan Bowie perhaps summarised the collected view from the diversity of comments made.

He welcomed focus on assessing quality of green belt and linking residential development to access to rail transport, including enhanced orbital network.

He welcomed recognition of need for central government to take the lead on strategic planning for London and wider south east given current planning framework, although this means that progress based on collaboration between Mayor and local district councils will be rather limited for the present.

However given that government focus is on housing and economic growth, for the Greater London 2020 proposition to win government support it will need to demonstrate specific housing and employment outputs, especially to generate infrastructure investment, given current government focus is on shifting infrastructure investment to Midlands and North. This will be actively considered by the presenters.

Other comments have been incorporated in this account.

Radical Reform of the Planning System: a New Vision for Planning including as influenced by the pandemic and anticipating the White Paper Discussion opened by Tony Travers of LSE.

Tony Travers thought that government planning reform focus is and will be on deregulation on the assumption that this will enable increased market led development. He added that the focus is mainly on process rather than achieving appropriate development outputs.

On this item Duncan's comment was that the indications are that the government would wish substantially to deregulate planning and this may include reviewing the Green Belt as the Planning

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT POPULATION AND NEW HOMES BEYOND THE M25

■ SOUTH ESSEX
■ NORTH KENT
■ TOTALS

POPULATION	NEW HOMES
784,927	67,256
467,562	30,801
1,252,489	98,057



Inspectorate has suggested.

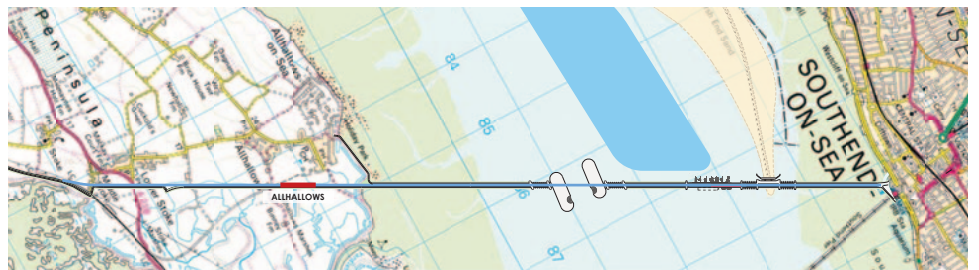
However ensuring appropriate residential and non-residential development, in locations supported by infrastructure, requires positive government intervention. Government intervention in plan-making has been inconsistent and often obstructing rather than facilitating appropriate development, as shown in their negative intervention on the London Plan and the recent saga of rejected plans in North Essex.

The Government needs to support local councils who welcome additional growth but also have a national and regional planning framework that both supports and requires local plan making.

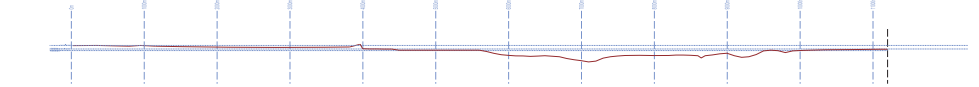
A focus on deregulation (for example extending permitted development) works against a LA led plan making system which is essential to ensure integrated development. ■

The next meeting of the London Planning & Development Forum will be on Monday 7th September, likely on Zoom. Members and readers will be notified.

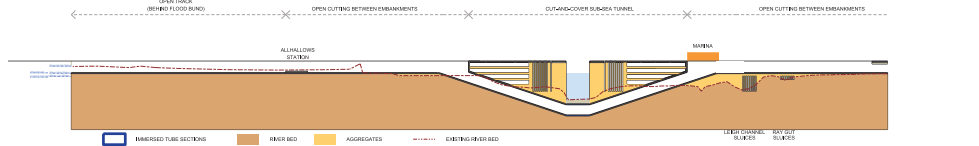
SEA REACH RAIL LINK 3KM TUNNEL



EXISTING SECTION



PROPOSED SECTION



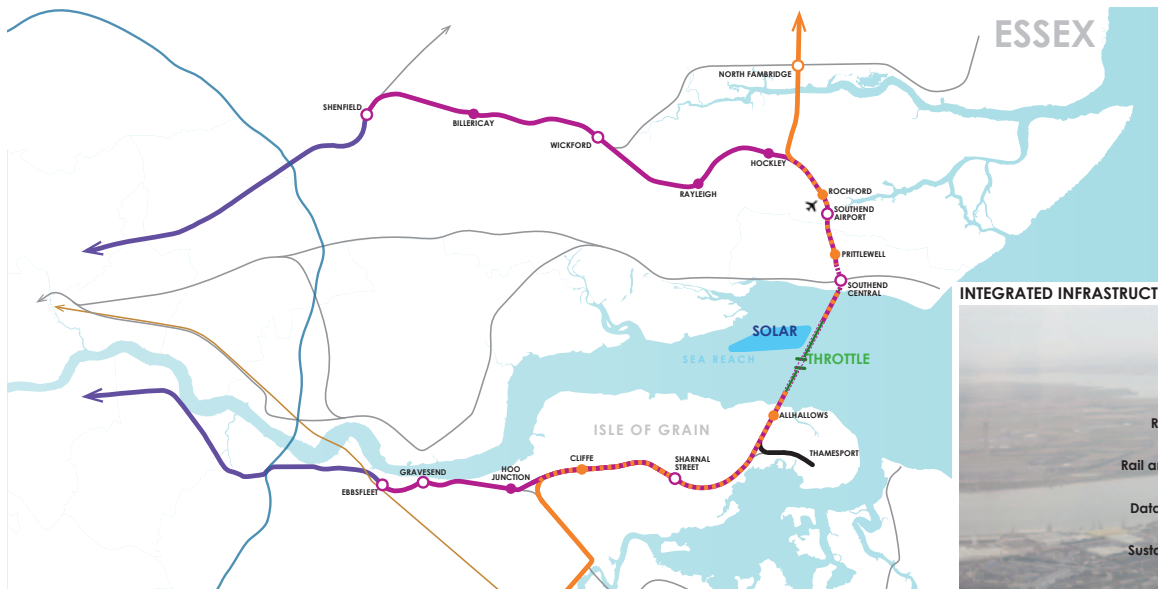
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RAIL LINK COMPONENTS

HOO JUNCTION CHORD, DUALLING OF THE ISLE OF GRAIN LINE, SEA REACH LINK, SOUTHWEND TUNNEL

■ M25 MOTORWAY
■ CROSSRAIL + C2E
■ THAMESPORT SPUR
■ FLOATING SOLAR
■ ORBITAL / TUNNEL
■ R25 ORBITAL
■ HS1
■ EXISTING RAIL LINES



INTEGRATED INFRASTRUCTURE

