

A STUDY OF NATIONAL PHYSICAL PLANNING POLICY

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## SUMMARY

The central thesis of this study is that the effectiveness of British town planning might be improved by a fuller recognition of the macro spatial dimension through an indicative national physical plan, explicitly as an instrument for securing socio-economic objectives. Despite the requirement of the Minister of Town and Country Planning Act 1943 for a national policy for the use and development of land; despite the complementary nature of policy-/plan-making; despite the need for context for sub-national planning; and despite the importance of overall planning of physical structure and resources in the national interest, Britain has no comprehensive strategic framework.

After introducing its aims (Chapter 1), the study consists of two parts. In Part I, the concept of national physical planning and its impact on Britain is examined. We begin with a widely-based synoptic view of its place and function (Chapter 2), we focus on salient features of the British statutory town planning system (Chapter 3), and we look more closely at regional/national aspects (Chapter 4), suggesting the utility of an enhanced role for physical planning at macro scale.

The main thrust of the thesis is in Part II which concentrates on the potential of an indicative national physical plan for Britain. We consider the strategic need for more coherent and positive guidance by the Government towards national physical structuring and resource allocation (Chapter 5). Justification for our concept is sought in theoretical models (Chapter 6), its operational framework and working tools are examined (Chapter 7), and we analyse the social/economic/physical basis of macro town planning to identify major issues requiring policy/plan responses in the physical system (Chapter 8). Then, using the experience of varied case studies (Chapter 9), we outline proposals for an indicative national physical plan (Chapter 10), and summarise prospects (Chapter 11).



## PREFACE

Town and country planning may be described as a means of attempting to secure the best use and development of land in accordance with human needs: it deals with the spatial structuring of the physical environment and is widely regarded as being synonymous with physical planning. Typically, this activity is institutionalised in systems of national government and operationalised through policy-/plan-making at various spatial scales - notably regional, metropolitan, urban and local. At national scale, however, policy-making is often evident, but plan-making is less obvious or even non-existent. Britain is no exception, and this study sets out to investigate the apparent paradox that, in a town and country planning system well known for its comprehensive qualities and as one of the most advanced in the world, so little attention has been paid to national physical planning.

Since the Minister of Town and Country Planning Act 1943 introduced modern British land use planning, central government has exercised a major policy role in respect of the physical environment: yet, despite the essential complementarity of policy and plan-making, there is no national physical plan. Therefore, this study aims to examine the town and country planning process in Britain with regard to:-

- (a) the concept of physical planning at national scale;
- (b) the case for a more effective national physical planning system; and
- (c) the possibilities of an indicative national physical plan.

If the study appears to embrace a plea for fuller recognition of physical planning at national scale, it must be said that, over the years, the view that some kind of national plan should form an integral part of our land use and development planning system has been extensively advocated. An appropriate national strategic framework could properly focus more sharply the amorphous character of national policy, bringing greater coherence and direction to the process of trying to satisfy national social and



economic objectives. Such a framework might, given political acceptability, usefully seek to establish a broad locational strategy for the country as a whole, providing nationwide context and understanding for functional organisation and decision-making concerned with the physical environment at all sub-national scales.

There is a popular and implicit misconception that the physical nature of town and country planning becomes less important in macro situations. This may be because the strategic aspects of physical planning have long been undervalued; but there is surely an absolute need to pay due attention to physical issues at regional and, indeed, national scales. The British system displays a 'policy-without-plan' philosophy at national scale, and, although this might suggest that a plan element is not important, the concept and potential contribution of an indicative national physical plan poses fascinating theoretical and practical challenges.

The study does not claim to break original research ground, but rather to investigate an important but neglected aspect of British town planning by means of an historical overview with prescriptive orientation. This involves bringing together and restructuring existing material and, consequently, acknowledgements are due to many sources, among which the work of Donald L. Foley has had a considerable influence. At a more personal level, I am grateful to Professor Edgar A. Rose for valued guidance and encouragement; to my wife, Lorna, and to June Rose for battling with drafts; to Judith Lambert for the final typescript; and to all who cannot be mentioned individually, but who have helped me in various ways.

G.W.B.J.

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## DEFINITIONS

The following (except in the case of quotations), as used in the context of this study, have the connotations ascribed to them below:-

Britain: Great Britain (England, Wales, Scotland)

Indicative plan: An advisory, non-binding guideline document (as opposed to a mandatory blueprint), though it may be statutory in the sense that it is required by act of Parliament.

Level/scale: The political/technical/spatial plane of resolution in an hierarchical action construct. The terms are largely regarded as interchangeable, but 'level' would be used to emphasise a political connotation (e.g. central government) while 'scale' is applied to technical planning situation (e.g. national planning).

National physical planning: The application of town planning at national scale (see Chapter 2).

Physical structure/infrastructure: The physical components of the environment and their spatial arrangement. The terms are largely regarded as interchangeable, but 'infrastructure' is used where it is particularly desired to stress physical aspects (e.g. towns, roads) as opposed to the broader concept of 'structure' (including e.g. natural and intangible features).

Planning: The generic activity of planning as defined by its characteristic process, as opposed to the subject matter to which the process is applied (see Chapter 2).

Social/economic/corporate planning: No attempt is made to define these fields: on their general nature there is perhaps consensus, but more detailed interpretations differ widely.

The Minister/Ministry/Department: The Minister or Secretary of State/Ministry/Department responsible for the exercise of the statutory town and country planning function.

The/this study: The author's present thesis.

The (date) Act: The Town and Country Planning Act of the year specified.

Town planning (town and country planning) = physical planning = environmental planning: The process which seeks to influence physical/spatial/environmental 'means' towards functional 'ends', or the organisation of land use in the interests of people and their activities (see Chapter 2).



## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION: AIMS OF THE STUDY

In considering how best to secure public participation in, and publicity for, the making of structure and local plans, the Skeffington Committee (1969) on Public Participation in Planning emphasised that the "reconciliation of different demands, interests and constraints [including] the application of governmental and regional policies" (para.33), was an integral and important element in the process. But in what wider context is participation in town and country planning<sup>1</sup> as a public policy--/ plan-making activity sought? Despite extensive central policy measures directed at the functioning and organisation of the physical environment, it is not easy for 'expert', let alone 'layman', to obtain a synoptic grasp of the Government's physical/spatial strategy for national resource and investment planning within which more localised planning must occur. How, for example, as Figure 1.1 suggests conceptually, can everyday social and economic activities (A) be properly related and resolved in terms of the necessary physical infrastructure for their effective operation at and between various sub-national spatial scales (B, C, D, E and F) without an overall co-ordinating national strategy or plan (G)?

The task of influencing the physical environment in the interests of social and economic development is focused largely in town and country planning (Schuster Committee, 1950; Ashworth, 1968; Hall, 1973). It is therefore difficult to over-emphasise the significance, or the limitations, of the Minister of Town and Country Planning Act 1943 as a public policy instrument to this end. The 1943 Act<sup>2</sup> created a requirement for "securing

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<sup>1</sup>Subsequently abbreviated to 'town planning' (see Chapter 2).

<sup>2</sup>6 and 7 Geo. 6, C.5. It remained operative until the Secretary of State for the Environment Order, 1970 (S.I. 1970 No.1681) transferred the planning function to a Secretary of State: that the mandate to plan continues as conferred in 1943 may be a tribute to foresight and flexibility or an indictment of unresponsiveness to change.



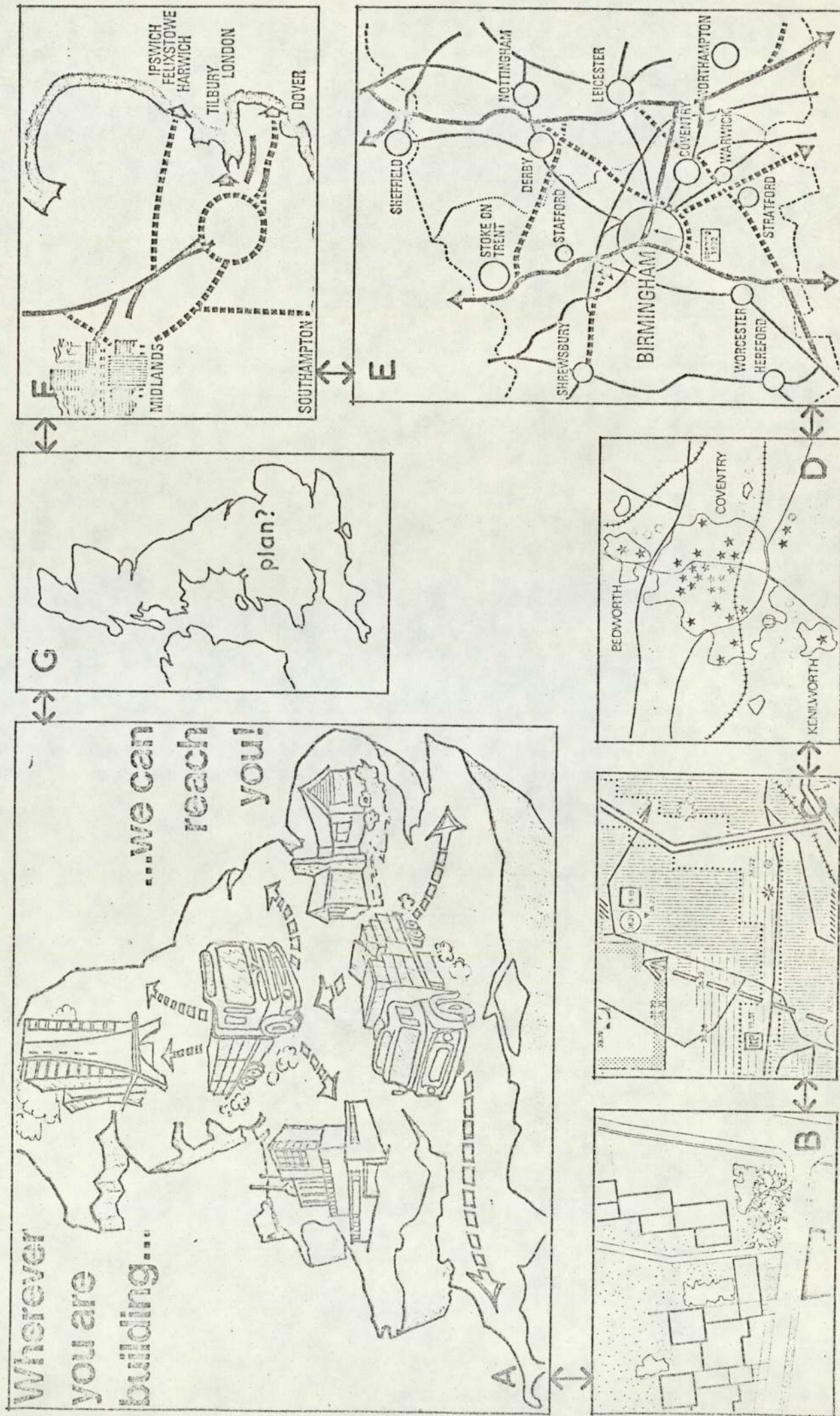


Figure 1.1 A conceptual view of national physical planning



consistency and continuity in the framing and execution of a national policy with respect to the use and development of land throughout England and Wales" (S.1).<sup>1</sup> It is still the mainspring of statutory town planning activity.

Consequent upon the 1943 Act, the historic Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 - now modernised in the 1968 and 1971 Acts - established the essentials of Britain's<sup>2</sup> present statutory land use planning system. But, although central government has taken a considerable interest in the physical environment<sup>3</sup> as a key variable in the country's social and economic organisation, the strong centralist planning model envisaged in the 1944 White Paper, 'The Control of Land Use' (Minister of Town and Country Planning, 1944), did not materialise. Plan-making is delegated formally at local scale, and less formally at regional scale, but at national scale the Government does not (observably) plan for the physical aspect of its territory in a comprehensive manner. Yet, accepting that the physical environment "is a continuum from microcosm to macrocosm" and that "change is ever-present at all levels" (McLoughlin, 1965b, pp.397-398), by the same token, in the ordering of adapted spaces and channels towards socio-economic ends, plan-making should be relevant at every spatial scale. For example, residential or port complexes viewed nationally are neither more nor less physical than similar complexes viewed locally: differences in scale will mean differences in approach, but the subject matter is still physical and will still require planning. This raises the question of whether the aims of the 1943 Act, assuming their validity, are best served by a town planning system, wherein, at the

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<sup>1</sup>There is similar provision for Scotland.

<sup>2</sup>Great Britain, with emphasis on England and Wales, is adopted as the unit of study, but the wider entity of the United Kingdom is not ignored.

<sup>3</sup>Witness the spate of legislative machinery (see Chapter 3).



highest level of resolution, there is neither a plan in the document sense, nor a coherent, discernable policy on those components which a plan might be expected to include.<sup>1</sup> We suggest that it is illogical and impracticable, to underrate the physical dimension at any spatial scale, not least the national.<sup>2</sup>

This assertion, central to the concept of national physical planning, might be supported in many ways: the Rochdale Committee (1962) on the Major Ports of Great Britain offers a good example. In considering the extent to which national needs are adequately met by our main docks and harbours, the Committee noted "that a fundamental defect in the organisation of ports in this country is the lack of any central planning", and advocated "a national policy for ports" (para.140). The Committee studied, inter alia, "the location of existing ports in relation to other activities and developments", and was impressed by the national significance of the 'cross' - the estuaries of the Thames, Mersey, Severn and Humber which handle over two-thirds of our foreign trade. This 'cross' centres upon the industrial Midlands, and its outline is reflected in the national pattern of the rateable value of industry (Figure 1.2), of major post-war developments (Figure 1.3) and of the planned motorway system. While accepting the dominant London-Liverpool axis, and, although "in the absence of any policy directed at positively reversing current trends, there is every reason to expect the traditional importance of the four estuaries ... to be maintained and emphasised" (para.64), the Committee also felt that, taking a national view, the estuaries of Southampton Water, Tyne, Tees, Clyde and Forth were "part of a complete picture. This

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. 'Long Term Population Distribution in Great Britain - a Study' (D.O.E., 1970) as a partial first step. This is an invaluable document, but it asks more questions than it answers.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Maud Commission (1969, para.50): "It seems often to be assumed that economic planning is a matter for central government, while land planning is, initially at any rate, for local government. But the two are indivisible".



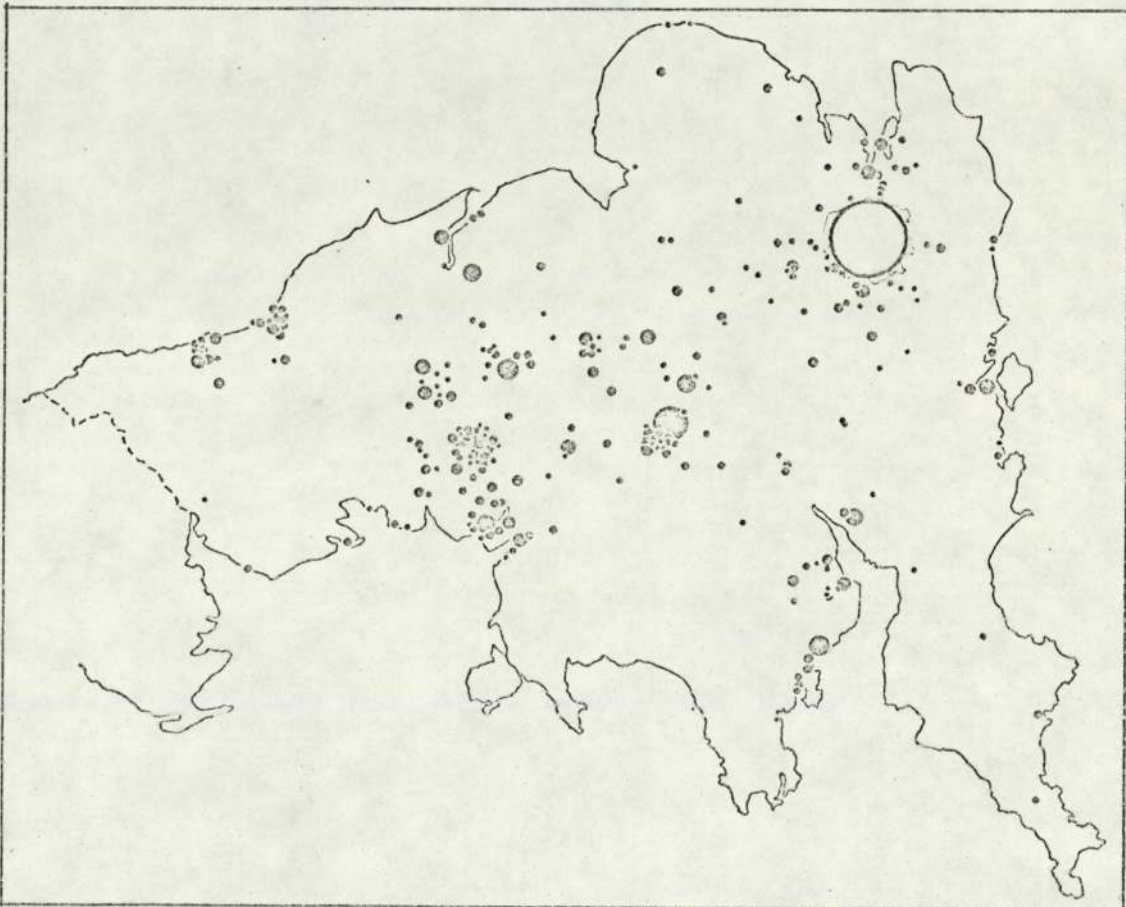


Figure 1.2 England and Wales: Distribution of industry as shown by rating statistics

Source: Willatts (1965)

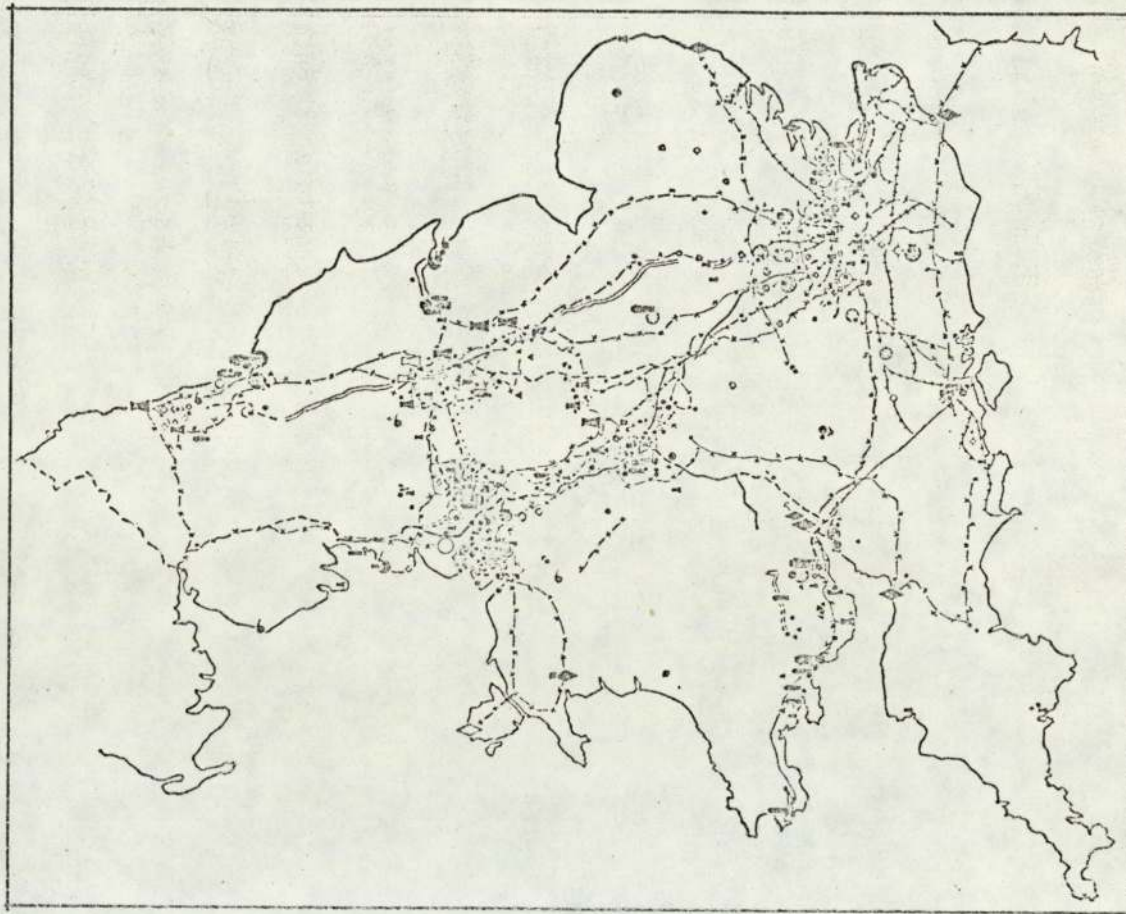


Figure 1.3 England and Wales: Location of major post-war projects, 1961

Source: Willatts (1965)



extended pattern offers a basis on which the port system of Great Britain might in the long term be developed" (para.65).

The Rochdale Report thus underlined the need for planning at the national scale to recognise physical factors as well as their social and economic *raison d'etre*, and, although it is concerned with the macro situation, a chapter on 'Local Planning' emphasises the interdependence of all spatial scales.<sup>1</sup> Random yet representative,<sup>2</sup> and relevant yet 'neutral',<sup>3</sup> in town planning context, the Report illustrates the need to consider physical ramifications of socio-economic phenomena and resource objectives on a national scale. The Rochdale Committee became, inevitably, involved in town planning matters: in attempting to deal with the problems of national port planning, the significance of interrelated activities and their physical/spatial consequences was inescapable. The committee accordingly regretted the absence of, and recognised the need for, central planning.

Despite having a sophisticated town planning system designed to guide the magnitude, pace and quality of physical change in the environment, Britain's nearest approach to a comprehensive policy/proposals 'package' was 'The National Plan' of 1965 produced by the Department of Economic Affairs. Although a strategic economic plan, it must have regard to infrastructure which, it has been said, "at the national level, conjures up ... images of roads, railways, airports and so on, connecting all the ports, harbours and towns together, so that they can communicate and have access one with the other, and bring life and prosperity to the whole of

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<sup>1</sup>"It is of the utmost importance that land ... for future port development should be reserved [since] lack of space for expansion ... has often handicapped port authorities" (para.305): planning authorities should "ensure that the potential for port development ... is safeguarded" (para.311).

<sup>2</sup>For example, the Beeching, Maud or Roskill Reports; new towns policy; or the regional problem could equally well have been used to make our point.

<sup>3</sup>It is town planning-related, not town planning-specific.



the society" (Juppenlatz, 1972, p.5). And, as 'The National Plan' itself suggested, "it will become more and more necessary to ensure that economic planning and physical planning of national land resources are integrated" (D.E.A., 1965, p.86). Government has not yet developed the idea much beyond the regional economic planning councils, but others see the need for some kind of national strategic framework (Rau, 1965; Lean, 1967; Amos, 1971; Burns, 1971; Rose, 1974) and the study will explore this thesis.

Arguments for physical planning at national scale turn upon its being a necessary means in a procedural system which, without it, would be less able to influence substantive situations effectively towards desired ends (Robertson, 1965; Ash, 1966; Bird, 1968; Simmie, 1971). The importance of geographical space<sup>1</sup> as "a new dimension of public concern and policy" is being increasingly recognised, as are "the uncertainties, for individuals and corporate groups, inherent in making decisions concerning the spatial allocation of resources and activities" (Chisholm and Manners, 1971, p.1). This is apparent both from the general interest in socio-economic problems of regional disparities, and from the particular environmental issues represented by, for example, the London motorway box or third London airport proposals. With the alleviation of the most blatant inequalities, spatial imbalance in conditions and opportunities is assuming a relatively greater significance for a nation with high expectations for future living-standards,<sup>2</sup> and the growing application of geographical analysis to environmental and physical resource problems is placing more onus on town planning to produce positive responses (Chisholm, 1972; Hall, 1973).

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<sup>1</sup>Webber (1964a, p.80-81), "looking for a clearer conception of ... spatially structured processes", noted that "increasingly interaction transcends the places at which people live". Such views must not be used to underplay the role of physical/spatial factors.

<sup>2</sup>Coates and Rawstron (1971, p.5) claim that "to enhance the future well-being of Britain increasing attention must be given to the spatial patterns" of socio-economic factors at regional and national levels.



Although the statutory requirement to plan is directed at a national situation, paradoxically - because plan-making is not practised at national level - regional, structure and local planning appear to operate in something of a contextual vacuum. The basic thesis which we discuss is the potential role of an indicative<sup>1</sup> national physical plan as a policy instrument for securing the organisation of the physical environment.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, it seems appropriate that central government should adopt a town planning role commensurate with its level of spatial responsibility, including a plan-making function complementary to those which it requires at other levels. The output should be an indication of national intent, looking inwards to the regions, offering them more adequate context, and outwards to Europe, giving Britain a more positive stance in supra-national strategy.<sup>3</sup> Catherine B. Wurster (1964, p.10) states that "planners have two quite different roles: as objective technicians and analysts, and as reformers - literally as both large scale designers of the future and as political movers and shakers". Indicative national physical planning would seem to invoke each of these roles in good measure.

The 1943 Act is the policy instrument which, implicitly if not explicitly, both defines statutory town planning and states its national aim. From it, the British system has derived its characteristics and ability to influence the physical environment at whatever spatial scale. We see this system not only attempting, as Donald L. Foley (1960, p.75) suggests, "to safeguard the public interest by providing a civic approach

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<sup>1</sup>The term is used, as in the Netherlands, to avoid any connotations of blueprint planning (Idenburg, 1971).

<sup>2</sup>This would, of course, require acceptance of polity - as does all other town planning activity, irrespective of technical merit.

<sup>3</sup>"There is growing recognition that this country is now part of an increasingly urbanised area embracing Belgium, the Ruhr and indeed Europe. The proposed channel tunnel or the third airport for London are relevant to the national, regional and local planning level ... We are seeing the emergence of policy planning at the strategic level as an **absolutely** essential prerequisite to the physical planning of cities and towns and their hinterlands" (Rose, 1970, p.5).



to land planning", but also, in a wider conception, dealing with the physical/spatial implications of investment and resource planning at the national strategic scale. There appears, in fact, to be a strong case for "strategic planning and policies which are coherent and consistent through the regions. All the indications suggest the need for central government initiative in establishing a more effective planning hierarchy or network. Planning involves a range of functions which require different instruments for their achievement. This variety reflects the variety and complexity of the problems addressed" (Rose, 1974, p.311).

Accordingly, as part of a broader process of seeking national social and economic ends, we hypothesise:-

- (a) that the task of statutory town planning in Britain is that defined in the Minister of Town and Country Planning Act 1943 of "securing consistency and continuity in the framing and execution of a national policy with respect to the use and development of land";
- (b) that the 1943 Act system treats of physical planning and that this has implications at all spatial scales, including national; and
- (c) that a necessary policy instrument in this system should be an indicative national physical plan.

In amplification of this hypothesis we suggest that place-work-folk relationships are the basic focus of statutory town planning; that these relationships have physical/environmental consequences at all spatial scales; that national physical planning is more than merely the application of town planning in a nation, being a process with inherent and distinct identity; that an ad hoc, fragmented approach to national policy for land use and development is no substitute for a coherent, integrated and comprehensive policy/plan 'package'; and that indicative physical planning at national scale should not only be done, but also be seen to be done.

Recent developments at local authority level have witnessed the beginning of a process of integrating comprehensive physical plan-making as part of a broader corporate approach: we envisage the development of a similar approach at national level. Certainly some kind of overall strategy planning for land use and physical infrastructure seems necessary as demands on scarce resources become ever more competitive. "Land is the chief of our national resources being the platform of all human activity. If it is mishandled, whether by unsound building development or by neglect of cultivation or destruction of amenities, part of its value is either currently wasted or permanently reduced, to the hurt of the nation" (P.E.P., 1941, p.2). This is no less true today, and the need for national action no less urgent. As the Uthwatt Committee (1942, para.17) stated, "every aspect of a nation's activity is ultimately dependent on land", and, in the opening words of the 1944 White Paper (M.T.C.P., 1944, para.1), "provision for the right use of land, in accordance with a considered policy, is an essential requirement of the Government's programme ...". The theme of our study is the contribution which a physical plan-making dimension might make in this direction at national scale.



Part I

NATIONAL PHYSICAL PLANNING AND THE BRITISH SCENE

"A national plan means a plan that directs itself to the entire national territory".

T. Hermansen (1970)

Therefore "in central government one would hope to see the development of a national plan, which would give direction to the constituent departments of government, and to the local planning authorities which must observe national policy".

F. J. C. Amos (1971)

## Chapter 2

### THE 'PLANNING' CONTEXT

In this chapter we seek to establish a context for our consideration of macro town planning in Britain. The aim is, first, to identify some important characteristics and relationships of 'national physical planning' as an element of 'town planning', and of both as part of the broader field of 'planning' (Section A); and second, to overview the implications of town planning at the national scale (Section B).

#### A. 'PLANNING', 'TOWN PLANNING' AND 'NATIONAL PHYSICAL PLANNING'

We approach the problem of trying to define our context by asking what is meant by 'planning', 'town planning' and 'national physical planning', and by offering, in response, a series of comments and propositions.

##### What is 'planning'?

'Planning' has such ubiquity (Banfield, 1959; Petersen, 1966) that some interpretation is required of this complex and polemical subject. We take it to mean "any activity which contributes to the establishment of objectives for the future and their attainment over time" (Faludi, 1970, p.1) involving "the application of scientific method - however crude - to policy-making" (Faludi, 1973, p.1). We distinguish between 'process' (a general human activity based on forethought, judgement and action) and 'content' (the objects to which the process is applied, establishing a particularised branch of the general discipline). 'Town planning' may therefore be regarded as a future-oriented decision-making process concerned with "the arrangement of spatial patterns over time" (Chadwick, 1971, p.24).<sup>1</sup> It embraces the concepts of 'planning and 'plans' (Shafer, 1967, p.258): the former, 'general

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<sup>1</sup>In town planning "space and land constitute the linking concept, rather than the process of planning which is common to a number of very different contexts" (Royal Town Planning Institute, 1971, p.10).



planning', represents "a method of arranging a sequence of action in advance", while the latter, 'physical planning', results from "the act of producing a design in physical form" (Hall, 1973, 2, p.36).

Despite the common process element of 'planning', a general theory has limited use because varied applications require particular approaches. It is possible, however, in the search for organising principles, to identify a number of almost universally pervasive characteristics - for example 'ends', 'choice', 'future', 'action' and 'comprehensiveness' (Davidoff and Reiner, 1962). It is also conceptually helpful to have some frame of reference such as that of "planning, environment, purpose and plan" developed by H. Ozbekhan (1969, pp.151-155). 'Planning' is seen as a process directed towards controlling changes in the dynamic and complex eco-system which is 'environment' for the 'purpose' of solving problems or obtaining organised progress based upon a given value system.<sup>1</sup> "'Plan' refers to an integrative hierarchically organised action construct where ... decisions are functionally ordered" by means of policy-making, goal-setting and administrative processes, often expressed in strategic plans. The facet design approach, through which Yehezkel Dror (1963) seeks "to identify the main factors and variables composing and shaping the planning process" (p.324) in its "bi-directional relation with its environment" (p.332), is another of many concepts to which we might refer. Dror suggests four primary facets so that "Planning = (general environment) x (subject matter) x (planning unit) x (form of plan), or  $P = A \times B \times C \times D$ " (p.342).

In Britain, however, the emphasis has been on practice rather than theory, and the statutory control of land use has produced its own particularised version of the 'planning' process - 'town planning'. Here,

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<sup>1</sup> Changes in values make it "unrealistic to search for a finite notion of an optimal environment" (Albers, 1968, p.20).



as F. J. C. Amos (1971)<sup>1</sup> and the majority of contemporary observers agree, the traditional 'physical' (land use) approach to the organisation of human activities and resource allocation increasingly needs to be seen as part of broader issues.

#### What is 'town planning'?

The only branch of 'planning' to achieve extensive formal recognition is 'town planning' with its public policy concern for the physical environment. Even in this context Ruth Glass (1959, p.45) suggests that it might be preferable "to use the term 'planning' in the purest sense, on the assumption that all aspects - economic, social, physical, national, regional and local planning - have to be regarded jointly as part of the same enterprise". But that would be to deny its unique statutory focus, the use and development of land. This constitutes a physical/spatial facet of the wider field of 'planning', and we therefore equate 'town planning' with 'physical planning' which we regard as having synoptic concern for man's physical environment throughout its spatial range in pursuit of social and economic objectives. It is this interpretation of 'town planning' which we adopt here, and to the town planning process we ascribe the role of influencing physical/spatial/environmental means towards functional ends, or the organisation of land use in the interests of people and their activities (Hall, 1973, 1, p.118). In this study, therefore, 'town planning' ('town and country planning') = 'physical planning' = 'environmental planning': all imply a spatial approach.

A nexus between town planning and the society which it aims to serve is crucial, and the idea of the 'planning environment'<sup>2</sup> is a key concept in such a relationship: "this is a mental construct consisting of objective

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<sup>1</sup>Amos defines 'planning' as the "evolving corpus of scientific methods used in the synoptic examination of man's environment and in making decisions affecting it" (p.305).

<sup>2</sup>Including, inter alia, level and pace of development; norms and values; political system and administrative structure; and institutional structure.



features of society which are of relevance to its capacity of outlining future courses of action in an efficient way" (Faludi, 1970, p.2). In Anglo-American practice theory<sup>1</sup> it is reflected and polarised in two main typological groupings - (a) blueprint/comprehensive/normative planning and (b) process-approach/disjointed incrementalism/functional planning.<sup>2</sup> These characteristics are compounded in the unitary and adaptive approaches of Foley (1964) which provide a framework for viewing the societal functions of town planning (Table 2.1), and which could well be profitably integrated to combine the better features of the deductive, utopian and inductive approaches defined by W. Petersen (1966).

Town planning involves 'ends' and 'means' (Banfield, 1959) in a process by which desired results are idealistically sought through a rational-comprehensive exercise (Meyerson, 1956; Altshuler, 1965).<sup>3</sup> As far as its 'means' are concerned, "town planning is permissive rather than deterministic [aiming] not so much to fashion behaviour but rather to present the widest range of opportunities" (Cherry, 1970, p.47). Its 'ends' are essentially social, and "it is intrinsic to the purposes and methods of planning that they are concerned with human betterment [in] a world in which the majority remain hungry and poorly housed" (Rose, 1970, p.3). Similarly, "the prime purpose of planning is the production of a better environment ... than that which is produced by the normal interplay of private action, government action and market forces" without public policy intervention (Thorburn, 1970, p.169).

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<sup>1</sup> Ernest Greenwood's term: "a systematic set of propositions upon the basis of which the professional may practice" (Foley, 1960, p.70-71).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the four-fold typology of Berry (1973): reactive or ameliorative problem solving; allocative trend modification; exploitive opportunity seeking; and normative goal orientation.

<sup>3</sup> The comprehensive approach is under criticism as a rational means of procuring ends in pluralistic situations: yet, "in a complete plan means and ends should follow from each other and form one whole conception" (Glikson, 1955, p.7) with both comprehensiveness (Hansen, W., 1968) and incrementalism (Lindblom, 1959) playing their part.



Table 2.1 Town planning approach: Foley's unitary and adaptive concepts

Source: after Foley (1964)

| Characteristic                                 | Unitary Approach   | Adaptive Approach  |
|--|--|--|
| 1) The plan                                    | Long-range locational-physical plan.   | Policies and proposals constituting course of action.  |
| 2) Substantive focus                           | Locational pattern of activities and physical characteristics, taking into account social and economic goals; controls ensure that development accords with desired character. | Social economy, including opportunities and standards for living, cultural and business activities, etc; public and private decision-making concerning development.              |
| 3) Methodology                                 | Intuitive-synthetic-political; aggregative; focus on product.  | Empirical-analytic-economic; disaggregative; focus on process.   |
| 4) Assumptions regarding community solidarity  | Solidarity from consensus; normative view of what is desirable.  | Solidarity from integration of diverse parts and viewpoints.   |
| 5) Assumptions regarding the political economy | Strong, centralized role for government (mix between local and non-local variable); market decisions important but controlled.   | Decentralization; pluralistic political economy; market-type decisions important; government provides leadership regarding prime-mover developments and ensures public interest. |
| 6) Assumptions regarding the future            | Strong design commitment and political leadership can provide self-fulfilling prophecy.  | Complexity of present and unknowability of long-range future; therefore focus on near future and adaptation.   |
| 7) Aesthetics of spatial arrangement           | Articulation: designation of spaces and channels. Designs reasonably final.  | Fluidity and interpenetration; no single, final design; latitude for experiment and change. Spatial plan at best provides framework for further development.                     |



The human/environmental/ecological field of town planning is, however, not only a complex system per se, but also a facet of a much wider system (Mitchell, 1961; McLoughlin, 1967; 1969; Chadwick, 1971), and British town planning may be regarded as "part of a broader social programme" (Foley, 1960, p.78). Therefore, despite its "unique pre-occupation with the total physical environment of town and country, [it should] relate the process of physical planning to corporate planning" (R.T.P.I., 1971, p.25), for "although traditionally ... concerned with land use and the physical environment, the factors which affect these two are so numerous and so fundamental ... that the town planner has a number of contributions to make to the [wider] planning process" (T.P.I., 1970, p.3).<sup>1</sup> Indeed, we "cannot pursue separate policies in [town] planning from corporate planning if ... concerned with the impact of its activities on the environment" (Stewart and Eddison, 1971, p.369): town planning is but one element in a broader field of action and management, which may or may not be formalised as a 'corporate planning' (Eddison, 1968; Friend and Jessop, 1969; Amos, 1971).

Political and financial constraints on town planning must also be acknowledged. "The planner as a political actor" (Faludi, 1973, pp.235-239) is not a wholly accurate image, but as governmental activity - wherein questions of public interest and ideology raise issues of public policy, power and legitimacy - town planning is inextricably involved with politics and public participation (Meyerson and Banfield, 1955; Foley, 1960; Skeffington Committee, 1969; Dennis, 1970; Arnstein, 1971; Eddison, 1971). Its focus is making decisions and taking action in conflict situations (Davidoff, 1965; Anderson, 1968; Bolan, 1969): its success will be directly related to the quality of alternative technical choices available and the ability of polity to select wisely. Furthermore, the quality of planning will depend very much on the financial resources which society is prepared to allocate to it.

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<sup>1</sup>The planner's "particular contribution ... is not just ... plans for the use of land [but] the quality of the environment" (Sharp, 1964, p.225).



What is 'national physical planning'?

Planning, that is to say "activities and ultimately interventions in processes, carried out in order to achieve a set of goals"<sup>1</sup> usually receives expression in the form of a plan - "the specification of the action to be taken in relation to the system being planned" (Wilson, 1970, p.69). In town planning, this procedure is applied over a range of spatial scales (T.P.I., 1970; Lyddon, 1971; Hilhorst, 1971), yet plan-making is by no means evenly practised throughout this range. Growing emphasis on social-economic *raison d'être* and interactions has seen the physical model assume fuller systemic relationships, but the national scale still attracts little recognition (Figure 2.1) despite the evident need of "a policy framework ... for Britain as a whole" (Cooper, 1970, p.325). It is, however, now receiving increased attention.

Peter Hall (1973, 1, p.119; 2, p.39) distinguishes local (or micro), regional/local (or intermediate), and national/regional (or macro) scales, each involving physical and functional relationships. At local scale, dealing with relatively small individual units of development (e.g. building estates, small towns), both relationships are basic. At the regional/local scale of concern for bigger collective units (e.g. large towns, city regions), functional aspects dominate physical. At national/regional scale, concern is for major national spatial patterning - including regional variations in urban growth and activities, movement systems, and concentration or dispersal characteristics - defined in functional terms, but still having large scale physical form. Here, although "the need to co-ordinate national economic growth and its physical expression in the regions is one of the most intractable problems ... it is both necessary and possible to effect ... co-ordination between economic growth, regional resource allocation and strategies of settlement location" (Rose, 1970, pp.18-19).

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<sup>1</sup>No ideal model exists but see, for example, Bird (1968); Lichfield (1968); Bolan (1969); McLoughlin (1969); Roberts (1970a, b); Chadwick (1971); Geddes (1971); Gans (1972).



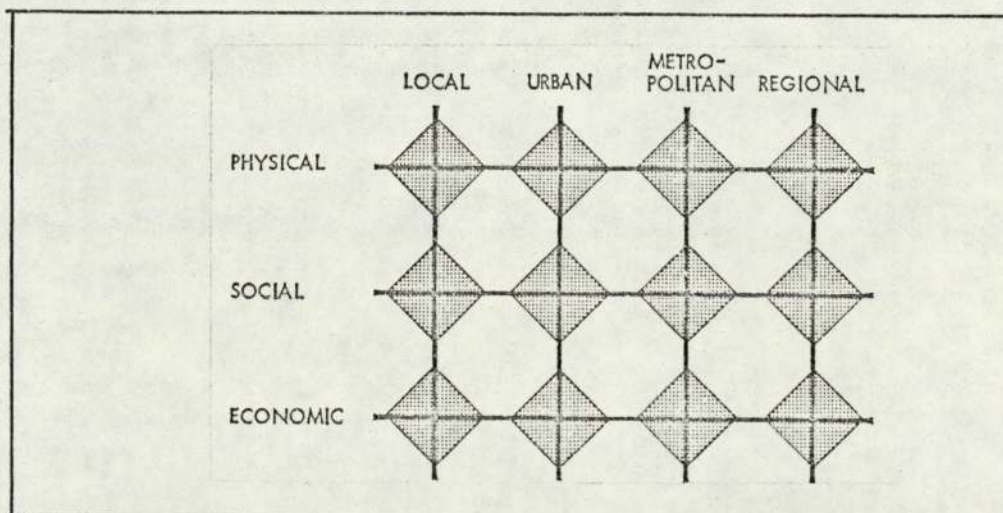


Figure 2.1 Spatial/functional relationships in town planning  
Source: Amos (1971)

| Spatial structure | Planning process |         |
|-------------------|------------------|---------|
|                   | A. Corporate     | B. Town |
| 1. Local          | 1A               | 1B      |
| 2. Regional       | 2A               | 2B      |
| 3. National       | 3A               | 3B      |

Figure 2.2 Planning process and spatial structure: a conceptual view of town planning  
Source: original, based on Foley (1964)

Our conceptual approach to the national scale of physical planning may be expressed in a planning process/spatial structure model (Figure 2.2) having two major elements: first, as part of a general discipline and broader corporate process designed to achieve socio-economic ends (column A), we distinguish town planning as a contributory process (among others) dealing with "the physical branch of the corporate plan"<sup>1</sup> (column B); second, we distinguish three primary scales of spatial concern - local, regional and national (1, 2 and 3 respectively).<sup>2</sup> Here we accord the national scale separate identity, which means that our regional scale corresponds with regional aspects of Hall's national/regional category and that we regard his regional/local category as a 'sub-culture' of this, differentiated as sub-regional planning. The model thus postulates a number of relationships between town planning, its wider context and different spatial scales wherein our particular concern is for town planning and national scale (3B) - or 'national physical planning'. By town planning we mean that kind of planning which deals with physical/spatial/environmental responses to social and economic needs: by 'national physical planning',<sup>3</sup> we mean the application of this at national scale.

#### B. TOWN PLANNING AND NATIONAL SCALE

As a discrete process concerning physical/environmental change and related decision-making, town planning is much criticised,<sup>4</sup> yet, as Professor E. A. Rose (1970, p.21) observes, "will be purposeful to the extent to which it responds to the need to adapt old patterns of population distribution based on outmoded

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<sup>1</sup>This form of words is attributable to a colleague, P. F. Truelove.

<sup>2</sup>An arbitrary division, but in accord with general practice theory: for example, the R.T.P.I. (1971, p.3) recognises "town planning in all its aspects (including local, regional and national)".

<sup>3</sup>Subsequently abbreviated to 'national planning'.

<sup>4</sup>It is often blamed for failure to deal with problems which are not its own (Stewart and Eddison, 1971) because it has "to fill gaps left by other kinds of decision-making" (McLoughlin, 1965b, p.400). For technical/practical limitations see, inter alia, Boyce et al (1970).



locational criteria, to new conditions created by social, economic and technical factors". Of the physical approach, Foley (1964, p.42) asserts that "it makes good sense to plan for the functional organisation that is geared to facilitate high-priority values and then to design the physical environment so as to provide the best setting [taking] into account the ways in which the physical environment ... facilitates or impedes various activity systems that are accommodated by that environment". And, as W. Lean (1967, p.230) emphasises, the physical approach is inextricable from the spatial since it "must include an examination of the economic, social and other aspects of the geographical relationships between land uses".<sup>1</sup>

Town planning is traditionally focussed in land use and, says F. A. Chapin (1965),<sup>2</sup> is subject to economic, social and public interest determinants interrelating in a human/environmental eco-system. It is regarded by Hall (1973, 1, p.120) as the physical expression of functions defined both topically, on the basis of residential, industrial or other activities, and geographically, on the basis of within-place and between-place activities. Its organisational approach is usually two-fold: the manipulation of these topic areas and their geographic implications either sectorally (i.e. on an individual, subject basis) or globally (i.e. on a collective, spatial basis) at and between different spatial scales (Gross, 1967; Boudeville, 1968; Tinbergen, 1969; Hermansen, 1970).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Amos (1971, p.306): although physical planning "only has an unequivocal claim to a role in the co-ordination of development to achieve a desirable physical environment ... with other specialist skills ... the spatial arrangement of human activities can do much to affect social and economic efficiency".

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Department of Civic Design, University of Liverpool (1961) or Keeble (1969) for a British view. Chapin defines land use as the spatial distribution of functions; the framework of activity patterns and their physical accommodation; or the regulation through value systems of space-using activities and their resulting use patterns.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. 'single objective' and 'multiple objective' planning (Hall, 1970, pp.3-4).



The public policy output of town planning - for, "to have utility, planning must produce some tangible ... results in the form of plans" (Chapin, 1965, p.457) - might be expected to take the form of a land use/development plan for accommodating the space and locational requirements of activities within the environment at the spatial scale under consideration. But, as Lloyd Rodwin (1959, p.47) has said, the perspectives of physical planning are usually "either outside the range of policy decisions at the national level which may vitally shape ... the local or regional level; or [*involve*] simply applying national economic policies to local or regional plans".<sup>1</sup> However, "effective integration of physical and social planning is likely only if adequate instruments exist for the national expression of their points of view, especially ... the basic investment and development policy of the government" (p.49).

Such an instrument is regional planning - "the process of formulating and clarifying social objectives in the ordering of activities in supra-urban space" (Friedmann, 1964, p.64) - which, by extension, has implications for supra-regional or national space. In regional planning, the Council of Europe (1968, p.27) ascribes considerable importance to the physical dimension: it "implies a whole range of measures designed to produce better utilisation of land" and may be described as an extension, on a regional scale, of town planning of the classic type. Regional and sub-regional planning<sup>2</sup> are characterised by emphasis upon resource allocation and land use respectively, and both are concerned with physical aspects (Hall, 1970, pp.20-24).

National matters are, however, often subsumed in regional scale, notwithstanding that "a general overview of the prospects of different regions

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the 1968 Act machinery.

<sup>2</sup> Based on the statistically uniform/static/administrative/homogeneous region and on nodal/dynamic flow/natural/organic regions respectively.



can only be provided in the first place from the centre" (Self, 1967, p.8). This central role is defined by A. R. Kuklinski (1969) and T. Hermansen (1970) as inter-regional or national, as opposed to inter-local or regional, planning: its function is to "outline the spatial dimension of national policies" (Kuklinski, 1970, p.270). Here, "in the spatial extension of urban physical planning ... and socio-economic community development planning ... physical planning has also been extended in geographical coverage leading to physical planning at the national level. The characteristic trait is that the national community is conceived as a physical-spatial system, consisting of complex interrelated networks of nodes and flows that have to be ordered in space in a functional way. Examples of physical planning at the national level include planning of the nation-wide networks corresponding to the region-wide networks at the inter-local level" (Hermansen, 1970, p.433).

National planning, at the highest level of generality, could be viewed as the application of the town planning process by a nation within its territory. However, it is much more than this. It might, in a discrete concept, be seen as processes whereby countries attempt to guide significant change and in which traditional global and sectoral approaches to social and economic development are integrated, through regionalisation, with the physical dimension (Boudeville, 1968; Hermansen, 1970; Kuklinski, 1970). In Britain, Lean (1967, p.229) recognises the need for "the co-ordination of elements under the control of the government and public authorities and elements outside their control, to achieve a given purpose [including] the framework within which private enterprise operates. In the absence of national planning the framework of public decisions is still present, but they are less co-ordinated. A very important element in national planning must [therefore] be physical planning".

The Council of Europe (1968)<sup>1</sup> considers that "a national town and country planning policy is the expression of a will, i.e. the desire to

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<sup>1</sup>An important source in view of its representative character.



master in the future the consequences of the progress of change in the structure of modern society" (p.52). Its main objective is "that of bringing about the best possible geographical distribution in order to ensure that human beings and their communities enjoy the best living conditions ... in an attractive environment". This implies that "the state would have to show its explicit desire for a 'new organisation' of space ... which the nation as a whole should help to bring about" (p.50): thus member states should proceed towards "a coherent physical planning policy at the national, regional and local levels" (p.93). In an analysis of national planning in west European countries, the Council distinguishes four categories of sophistication (Table 2.2), but "nowhere has a truly national plan for town and country planning been drawn up which provides for the use of the different areas making up the territory of a state" (p.49).<sup>1</sup>

National planning<sup>2</sup> - which alone can provide the necessary context for and resolve inter-regional matters in the light of inter sectoral decisions and resource allocations - must inevitably be seen as part of the spatial continuum.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, the Council's view that "regional planning is one of the roads at the end of which lies the society of tomorrow" (p.28), is similarly applicable to national planning. It is part of "the spectrum of spatial planning activities" (Friedmann, 1964, pp.64-65) concerned with the geographic allocation of resources: "to the extent to which there is national planning ... spatial implications of any set of resource allocations should be guided by foresight, a review of the available alternatives, and a clear vision of the public interest". Regionalisation is, therefore,

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<sup>1</sup>"Even in the Netherlands, where such a procedure has been established, it proved necessary to opt in favour of the definition of a certain number of directives and objectives constituting a national policy while elsewhere, only the existence of national economic planning has made it possible for town and country planning to find an important place ..." (p.49).

<sup>2</sup>Spatial definition is not absolute: for example, national and regional scales may be synonymous in a small nation-state (e.g. Luxembourg).

<sup>3</sup>Cf. the 1968 Act system.



Table 2.2 National planning characteristics in Council of Europe

Source: after Council of Europe (1968)

| Member States   | National planning characteristics |   |   |   | E.E.C. member |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|---------------|
|                 | 1                                 | 2 | 3 | 4 |               |
| Austria         | X                                 |   |   |   |               |
| Belgium         |                                   |   | X |   | *             |
| Denmark         |                                   |   | X |   | *             |
| France          |                                   |   |   | X | *             |
| Western Germany |                                   |   |   | X | *             |
| Greece          |                                   | X |   |   |               |
| Ireland         |                                   |   | X |   | *             |
| Italy           |                                   | X |   |   | *             |
| Luxembourg      |                                   |   | X |   | *             |
| Netherlands     |                                   |   |   | X | *             |
| Norway          |                                   |   | X |   |               |
| Sweden          |                                   |   | X |   |               |
| Switzerland     | X                                 |   |   |   |               |
| Turkey          |                                   | X |   |   |               |
| United Kingdom  |                                   |   |   | X | *             |

- 1 Central responsibility limited to sectoral intervention in water, transport, agriculture, etc. but no comprehensive federal planning.
- 2 Planning identified with regional economic development policy through which central authority makes generalised directives.
- 3 Well developed local and regional planning by local authorities with central co-ordination including application of policy guidelines.
- 4 Directives for national planning policy established in national plans or by the competent Minister.



crucial "for comprehensive national development in which all parts of the country contribute ... to the attainment of national objectives".

We accordingly begin to identify a distinctive role for town planning at national scale (Self, 1967; Kuklinski, 1969; Hermansen, 1970; Hall, 1970; Amos, 1971; Burns, 1971). It will have a strong socio-economic/resource allocation emphasis, but its unique contribution will be to deal with the macro physical/spatial implications of planning the country as a whole. "Clearly, this type of planning has to be done partly at national level, because it involves allocating national resources between regions as well as sectors, but ... also at the regional level, because it involves channelling the resources given over by the central government ... and co-ordinating them regionally to make a meaningful physical plan". We are thus "dealing with a level that allocates national investments to an aggregate regional level ... a job which should be done partly by central government and partly by a regional administrative structure" (Hall, 1970, p.21).

But whereas some see national planning as a part of a national/regional dichotomy, it is accorded a distinct identity by Hermansen (1970, p.432): "a national plan means a plan that directs itself to the entire national territory". It may be global, covering all sectors, or sectoral, directing itself to particular sectors. The global plan is normally developmental, dealing "with the development process as an entity involving economic and cultural growth as well as induced changes in economic social and spatial structures, and aims at controlling, speeding up and directing this process by means of closely co-ordinated globally conceived development efforts"; the sectoral plan is adaptive, adjusting "sectors to trends set by the development process and the growth of other sectors as well as to internal structural changes". We therefore see national planning as an independent extension of Hall's national/regional category, dealing with the national scale per se: our specific interest is in its global application with respect to physical structuring of the environment.



In this chapter, town planning has been identified as a particular branch of the planning process, which, as a public policy instrument, treats of land use (interpreted broadly) as a means towards socio-economic ends (Figure 2.2). Its concern is for a physical environment that will satisfactorily accommodate activity and communication systems in locational/distributional terms. This means that it must inevitably span the spatial spectrum and that the physical implications of, say, an annual national housing programme of 500,000 dwellings on the one hand, or half a dozen bungalows in a remote village on the other, are equally town planning issues. As such, they - together with other matters related to physical infrastructure and resources - are also equally potential subjects of plan-making at their respective spatial scales. We may thus identify our special facet of concern (using Dror's formula) as

$$P = (\text{Britain's human/environmental eco-system}) \times (\text{town planning aspects of resource allocation}) \times (\text{the nation}) \times (\text{indicative physical plan}).$$

If we then develop, as in Figure 2.3, our 'planning process/spatial structure' model (I) by the addition of a 'planning approach' dimension (II) which distinguishes sectoral (A) and global (B) methods, we are further able to define the focus of our study in terms of cells I-3B and II-3B, namely comprehensive town planning at national scale. Therefore, we conclude that, since planning necessarily involves some specification of action in relation to the system being planned, this enterprise would logically need to be supported by an indicative national physical plan.



| Spatial Structure | I. Planning process |         | II. Planning approach |           |
|-------------------|---------------------|---------|-----------------------|-----------|
|                   | A. Corporate        | B. Town | A. Sectoral           | B. Global |
| 1. Local          | I - 1A              | I - 1B  | II - 1A               | II - 1B   |
| 2. Regional       | I - 2A              | I - 2B  | II - 2A               | II - 2B   |
| 3. National       | I - 3A              | I - 3B  | II - 3B               | II - 3B   |

Figure 2.3 National town planning approach: a conceptual view

Source: original, based on Foley (1964)



## Chapter 3

### THE BRITISH SCENE

National concern for the individual's welfare and the public interest are a tradition of British government (Glass, 1959), but its involvement in land use is recent and only following the 1943 Act did this become "a relatively important governmental activity ... pulling together markedly diverse threads of influence" (Foley, 1960, p.69). This chapter<sup>1</sup> seeks to examine the procedural development and characteristics of the town planning system in Britain (Section A); to consider its impact on substantive events (Section B); and to assess its effectiveness towards achieving "a national policy with respect to the use and development of land" (Section C).

#### A. THE TOWN PLANNING SYSTEM

Town planning materialised when "a sufficient body of people was convinced that [it] could make a unique and necessary contribution to the happiness, welfare and prosperity, particularly of townspeople, but ultimately of the whole nation" (Ashworth, 1968, p.2). Despite its local and civic design orientation in this formative period,<sup>2</sup> there was a growing demand for a more comprehensive approach to town planning:<sup>3</sup> it "became a separate governmental function because it treated problems which were real and recognisable but otherwise untouched" (p.235), and by the 1930s represented a distinct ideology seeking physical solutions to socio-economic problems. Its spatially

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<sup>1</sup>The work of Foley (1960), Benevolo (1967), Ashworth (1968), Cherry (1970, 1972), Cullingworth (1972) and Hall (1973) is particularly acknowledged.

<sup>2</sup>Its early aim was improved health and amenity through reform of the physical environment; its motivation, human thought interacting with socio-economic conditions; its focus, the unsalubrious industrial town and the desire to respond with utopias; its leaders, practical visionaries; and its procedures, local authority controls and 'schemes'. Public policy origins, in public health and housing legislation leading to the first Town and Country Planning Act of 1932, are well documented.

<sup>3</sup>Typified in the synoptic/ecological view of Sir Patrick Geddes to whose influence British town planning owes so much.



conscious framework - embracing unitary/adaptive, plan-making/control and central/local dichotomies - was emerging and there was increasing awareness<sup>1</sup> "that individual towns could not be planned in isolation and the principle of decentralisation was studied in relation not only to the diffusion of the town among the suburbs but also to regional and even national planning" (p.201).

Town planning owes much to the period of World War II. In particular the Barlow Commission (1940) on The Distribution of the Industrial Population has exerted a powerful and continuing influence: "one simply cannot over-estimate ~~its~~ importance on the whole structure of post-war British planning, and indeed on the whole structure of post-war British society" (Hall, 1970, p.74). With the Scott Committee (1942) on Land Utilisation in Rural Areas, the Uthwatt Committee (1942) on Compensation and Betterment and the Beveridge Committee (1942) on Social Insurance and Allied Services, it was instrumental in channelling the ethos of the formative years "towards a new conception of planning" (Uthwatt Committee, 1942, para.15). This looked to "an order in which the forces of the market would not merely be restrained, but in many cases completely superseded, by comprehensive planning; ... in which the location of industry would be determined completely by government controls; ... and in which the activities of the private speculative builder were subsumed ... by public Development Corporations and local authority enterprise" (Hall, 1973, 1, pp.617-618).

The Government's deliberations on the problems of post-war reconstruction led to the conclusion "that the principle of planning will be accepted as national policy and that some central planning authority will be required; that this authority will proceed on a positive policy for such matters as agriculture, industrial development and transport; that some services will require treatment on a national basis, some regionally and some locally".<sup>2</sup> The outcome - after much political argument concerning the form,

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<sup>1</sup>By Abercrombie, Adams, Osborn, Purdom, Unwin and others.

<sup>2</sup>H. L. Debates, Vol. 118, February 26, 1941.



status and powers with which the new authority should be vested - was a separate Ministry of Town and Country Planning: the Minister was "charged with the duty of securing consistency and continuity in the framing and execution of a national policy with respect to the use and development of land ...". But, while the 1943 Act gave rise to a new department, the direction for action was pointed by the 1944 White Paper 'The Control of Land Use' (M.T.C.P., 1944).

The White Paper acknowledged the need to correct the defect that, because of the purely local character of 1932 Act planning, it was not possible "effectively to secure modification of local schemes in order to meet regional and national interests" (para.4). New houses; new layout; new schools; the balanced distribution of industry; well-balanced agriculture; national parks, forests, sea and countryside; a new, safer and more effective highway system; airfields "- all these related parts of a single reconstruction programme involve the use of land, and it is essential that their various claims on land should be so harmonised as to ensure for the people of this country the greatest possible measure of individual well-being and national prosperity. The achievement of this aim is an interest of all sections of the community, both in this and in succeeding generations. The Government desire to make that achievement possible" (para.1). Such an approach, accompanied by Government action to secure universal and uniform control over development, to deal with compensation and betterment, and to provide for public acquisition, appeared to promise a strong and positive centralised town planning model.

In the event an all-embracing comprehensive 'package' did not materialise, and these aims were separately pursued by the Town and Country Planning Acts and by 'related' legislation<sup>1</sup> in policy responses possessing distinct global and sectoral characteristics respectively. This land planning

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<sup>1</sup> Acts dealing with matters relevant to town planning. Cf. Hall (1970, pp. 68-69).



machinery (Sharp, 1969) comprises mandatory,<sup>1</sup> discretionary,<sup>2</sup> or informative<sup>3</sup> public policy instruments concerning both town planning per se, and a whole range of measures dealing with the distribution of industry, new/expanded towns, countryside, housing, transportation and other related fields (Figure 3.1 and Table 3.1). Thus, while the White Paper made it clear that it was "not proposed that a single master plan should be devised by the Government and imposed on the country", the resultant system has never possessed the coherent, unitary macro approach which might have been expected if the Minister was to provide, "on behalf of the Government as a whole, that guidance and impetus ... that can be derived only from a knowledge of national needs" (M.T.C.P., 1944, para.40).

British town planning operates through national, regional and local agencies. National responsibility has rested since 1970 with the Department of the Environment (Figure 3.1) which is much more comprehensive than its predecessors. Its role in respect of the physical environment is summarised in the White Paper 'The Reorganisation of Central Government' (Prime Minister, 1970, para.31): it deals with "the planning of land - where people live, work, move and enjoy themselves"; it has "the leading responsibility for regional policy"; and it is responsible, inter alia, for the construction and transport industries, for amenity and conservation in town and country and for pollution control. The opportunity therefore appears to exist for a strong and cohesive centralist national approach. Statutory plan-making and control, however, have always been (and remain) delegated to local planning authorities - the Minister simply exercising somewhat tenuous policy co-ordination in pursuit of "consistency and continuity" - while regional planning received little recognition until, in the mid-1960s, Government initiative led to extensive, but largely ad hoc, regional and sub-regional activity (Sharp,

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<sup>1</sup>Acts of Parliament and statutory instruments.

<sup>2</sup>Ministerial guidelines such as circulars, memoranda, manuals and bulletins.

<sup>3</sup>Green/White papers; reports of commissions, committees and departments; etc.





Table 3.1 Town planning and 'related' fields: Legislation, Royal Commissions and Committees, 1940-1972

Source: original

| System                     | Action | 1940 | 1941 | 1942 | 1943 | 1944 | 1945 | 1946 | 1947 | 1948 | 1949 | 1950 | 1951 | 1952 | 1953 | 1954 | 1955 | 1956 | 1957 | 1958 | 1959 | 1960 | 1961 | 1962 | 1963 | 1964 | 1965 | 1966 | 1967 | 1968 | 1969 | 1970 | 1971 | 1972 |   |   |   |   |
|----------------------------|--------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---|---|---|---|
| Town and country planning  | A<br>B |      | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X | X |   |   |
| Industry and employment    | A<br>B | X    |      |      |      |      | X    |      |      |      |      | X    |      |      |      |      |      | X    |      |      |      | X    |      |      |      |      | X    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |   |   |   |   |
| Housing                    | A<br>B |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | X    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | X    |      |      |      | X    |      |      |      |      | X    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |   |   |   |   |
| New towns/town development | A<br>B |      |      |      |      |      | X    | X    | X    |      |      |      | X    |      |      |      |      | X    | X    | X    |      | X    |      |      |      | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X | X | X |   |
| Rural/recreational/amenity | A<br>B |      | X    |      |      |      | X    |      | X    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | X    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |   |   |   |   |
| Transportation             | A<br>B |      |      |      |      |      | X    |      | X    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | X    |      |      |      |      |      | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X | X | X | X |
| Others                     | A<br>B |      | X    |      |      |      | X    | X    | X    |      |      | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X | X | X | X |

A Acts  
B Royal Commissions and Committees Reports



1969; D.O.E., 1971). Thus, although policy issues were nationally pervasive,<sup>1</sup> plan-making was left to micro scale. The 1947 Act (S.6(a)) required local planning authorities to prepare development plans "indicating the manner in which ... land ... should be used". These were approved centrally and eventually covered the whole country: but there was no overall macro strategy to assist in their preparation or assessment, and it seems that the Government merely "hoped that, by the time plans are submitted ... the national and regional aspects will have received their due attention and that adjoining plans will agree" (Minister of Local Government and Planning, 1951, p.26).

The town planning inertia of the 1940s has been maintained through a continuously evolving variety of public policy responses (statutory and advisory) in the environmental field (Figure 3.1 and Table 3.1). However, comprehensive micro planning has received context not by a comprehensive macro 'package' such as the 1944 White Paper foreshadowed, but rather by a series of national sectoral measures.<sup>2</sup> The Government dealt specifically and separately with industrial location, 'new communities', rural/recreational/amenity aspects, housing, transportation, education, land and administration. This in itself was not a matter for criticism had not the system been less than satisfactory in terms of integration between the different sectoral areas and of coherent overview at the macro scale (Swift, 1961). For example, regional issues led to the Toothill, Hailsham and Hunt Reports; to a series of official studies and plans; and to the White Papers on Scotland and Wales. But each represented ad hoc attempts - having disparate terms of reference, reasons and objectives - to deal with contemporary social, economic and political problems, despite the fact that these problems, though distinct, were closely interrelated. Thus, while adaptive attitudes were certainly appropriate, their effectiveness might have been enhanced if set within a

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<sup>1</sup>For an overview, see P.E.P. (1951a).

<sup>2</sup>The Distribution of Industry Act 1945, New Towns Act 1946, and National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 are particularly notable.



more cohesive, unitary framework. And in other areas, such as transport, the same lack of integration was typical. The Rochdale, Beeching, Buchanan and Roskill Reports treated aspects of sea, rail, road and air movements respectively, but any explicit articulation of their interactions with each other, and with land use planning, was manifestly lacking.

At the level of central government, therefore, British town planning has been characterised by an image of fragmented and disjointed policy. However, over the last decade, a fuller application of the 'comprehensive ideal' at macro scale has received significant support, stimulated by the new dimensions of outlook which followed the work of the Planning Advisory Group (1965) and also of the Maud (1969) and Kilbrandon (1973) Commissions.<sup>1</sup> 'The Future of Development Plans' (P.A.G., 1965) advocated a revised development plan system capable of responding to the requirements of a "fast growing population [and the] surge of physical development" which this would generate (para.1:33), and a revival of 'broad brush' approach (para.1:22). It was regretted that "regional planning issues and the changing social and economic relationships between town and country [were] ill-defined and uncertain" (para.1:27). As a result, proposals for a system in which "national [as well as] regional and local efforts towards a clear articulation of planning goals should be greatly encouraged" (McLoughlin, 1966, p.261) were reflected in the 1968 Act and subsequently.<sup>2</sup>

## B. RATIONALES AND DIMENSIONS OF CHANGE

We now turn from the procedural to the substantive focus of British town planning. Hall (1973, 1, pp.106-111) distinguishes seven major philosophical attitudes which have strongly influenced events. First, from Barlow, the belief in urban containment and concern for regional imbalance, responding to the concept of comprehensive economic and physical controls to relieve

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<sup>1</sup> Discussed in Chapters 7 and 10.

<sup>2</sup> "Though the 1947 system ... has technically been subsumed by the 1968 essentially its foundations remain the same ..." (Hall, 1973, 1, p.35).



conurban congestion by diverting growth to depressed areas or local decentralisation to 'new communities'; second, from Scott, the need to protect agricultural and rural land; third, from Uthwatt, the importance of land values in relation to the need for planning; fourth, from Beveridge, the 'outlawing' of the social evils of physical want, disease, ignorance, squalor and idleness and the adoption of the principle of full employment; fifth, underpinning the idea of physical determinism as a means of social improvement; sixth, the concept of attaining some desirable end-state through the physical form of a master plan; and finally, faith in the land use plan as a local mandatory instrument of broader policies.

Most contemporary assessments of substantive issues concerning physical change<sup>1</sup> agree that the theme has been fairly standard in qualitative terms and is likely to remain so, but that quantitatively it has been neither constant nor expected: first, the pace and magnitude of change exceeded predictions, and second, its spatial incidence shows marked characteristics. Since 1931, "urban England has witnessed a rate of change unparalleled" in terms of population and national wealth (Hall, 1973, 1, p.614). Although the bulk and growth of population, activity and wealth is concentrated in the axial belt (Fawcett, 1932; Taylor, 1938) or Megalopolis England (Hall, 1973, 1, pp.294-384) from the South East region to the North West (Figure 3.2), there were significant variations (Figure 3.3). The dominance of the South East and Midlands strongly contrasted with poor growth rates in northern metropolitan areas, yet the latter claimed a disproportionate amount of physical growth because of extensive urban renewal. Decentralisation was

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, McLoughlin (1965a, p.259): "The population ... was about 51 million in 1961 and is expected to grow to 74 million by 2010. Real income per head should more than double [and] the number of motor vehicles may rise from 9 to 40 millions. The big cities will continue to exert their unrelenting pull ... . Economic growth will be favoured in the burgeoning regions and in the 'corridors of power' linking them [causing] yet further economic growth and population concentration. Modern manufacturing is greedy for space [while] the affluent worker and his family will 'consume' more and more space at home, at the coast and in the hills [creating] problems of nature conservation ... . Last but by no means least ... is the daunting problem ... of our 19th century industrial areas."



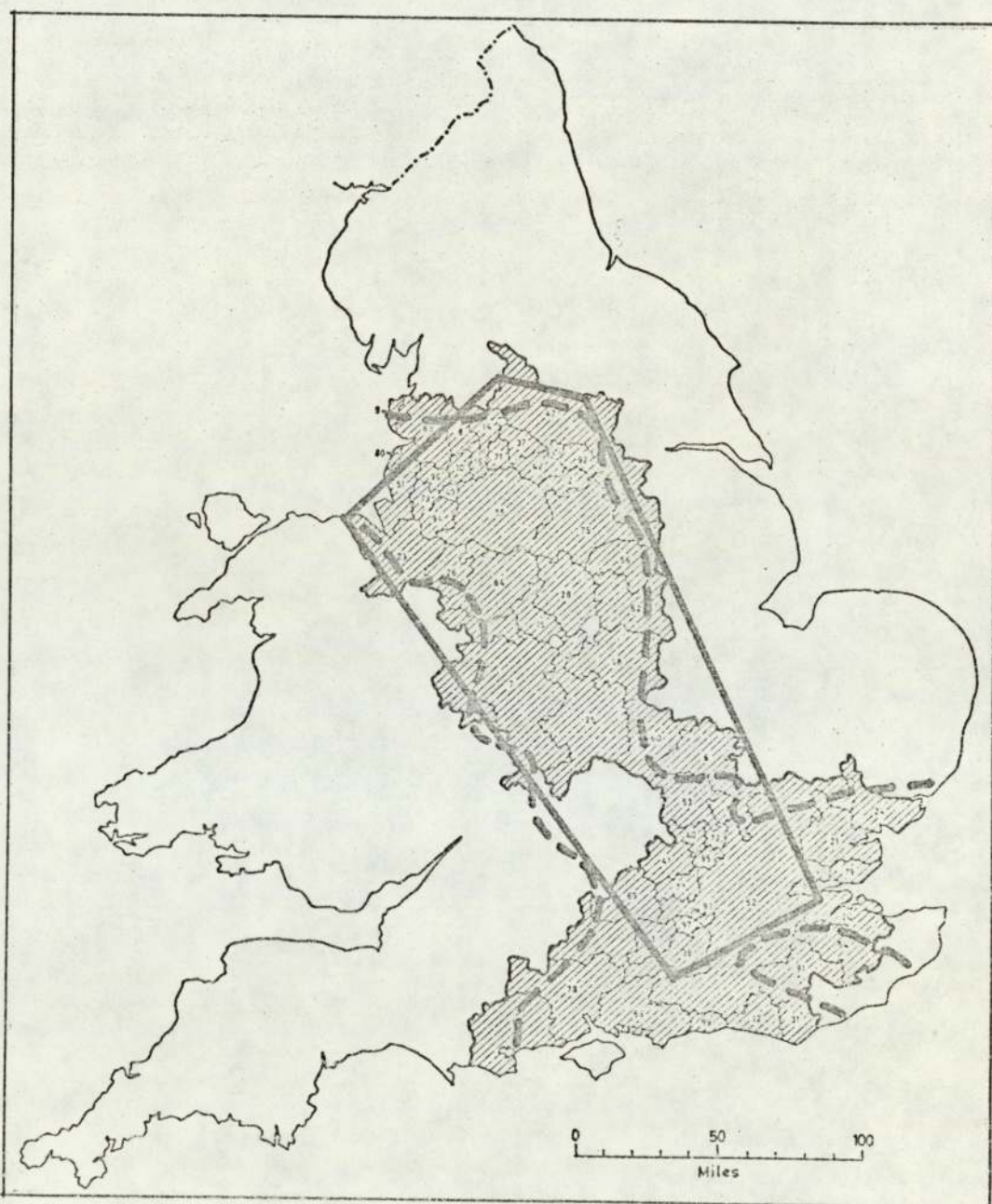


Figure 3.2 Megalopolis England

Source: Hall (1973, 1)

Showing also

The axial belt (Fawcett, 1932)



The 'coffin' (Taylor, 1938)





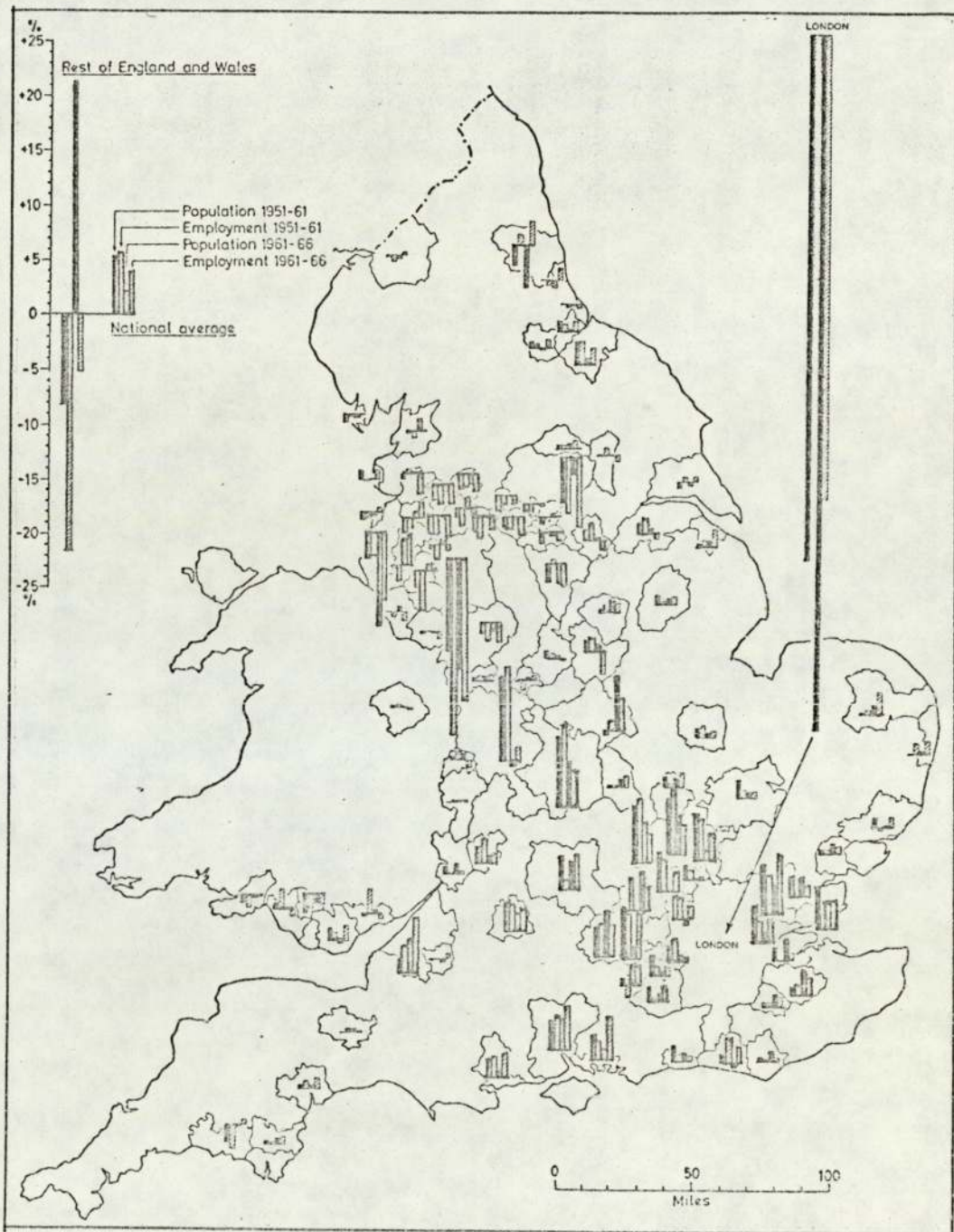


Figure 3.3 England and Wales: S.M.L.As., population and employment shift analysis - deviations from national average, 1951-1961 and 1961-1966

Source: Hall (1973, 1)



relative almost everywhere, absolute in some northern areas, and affected population/large urban areas rather than employment/smaller ones: in respect of population it was general by the 1950s but, because of lag in job movement, not marked in employment until the 1960s. Certainly the megalopolitan axis has been reinforced rather than diminished: as to the future "these changes are still working themselves out" (p.616) putting pressure on extra-urban areas as living standards and demand for services increase.

Such events, exemplified in Table 3.2, created an important need for readjustments in terms of policy/procedural approaches to a system wherein social and economic changes, and consequential physical changes, were expected to be relatively slight. The status quo had appeared to be an implicit goal; the problems which rapidly increasing population, affluence, leisure and mobility imposed on the urban fabric (Tetlow and Goss, 1968) were not foreseen; and the complementarity of town and country (Howard, 1965; Reade, 1968b) was quite inadequately recognised and facilitated. The gap between the attitudes and expectations of the 1940s and subsequent happenings is reflected in two phases in the evolution of town planning corresponding broadly with the 1950s and the 1960s. The former period was typified by emphasis on the market as the mainspring of development, and by growth pressures causing considerable physical expansion in and around larger urban concentrations: the latter period saw, in response to pressures for development, a return to more positive planning and intervention at the city region scale through regional economic planning, structure planning and local government reform. But, despite the national character and importance of the problems, there was no move to introduce the kind of comprehensive approach which an indicative national physical plan might bring.

### C. NATIONAL POLICY 1943-1973

Foley (1960, pp.76-79) makes three propositions concerning the ideological and substantive basis for British town planning:-

Table 3.2 Some regional differences in post-war growth in Britain

Source: after Hall (1973, 1, pp.329, 622-625)

| Form of physical growth                               | London |      |      | West Midlands |      |      | South Lancashire |      |      | Other megalopolis areas |      |      |   |  |   |  |   |
|---|--------|------|------|---------------|------|------|------------------|------|------|-------------------------|------|------|---|--|---|--|---|
|   | Pop.   | Emp. | Com. | Pop.          | Emp. | Com. | Pop.             | Emp. | Com. | Pop.                    | Emp. | Com. |   |  |   |  |   |
| Peripheral growth: freestanding towns                 | X      | X    | X    |               |      |      | *                | +    |      | *                       | +    |      | X |  | X |  | X |
| Peripheral growth: conurbations                       |        |      |      | X             | X    | X    |                  |      |      | X                       | X    | X    |   |  |   |  |   |
| Village expansion: green belt                         |        |      |      |               |      |      |                  |      |      |                         |      |      |   |  |   |  |   |
| Village/small town expansion: beyond green belt       | X      | X    | X    |               |      |      |                  |      |      |                         |      |      |   |  |   |  |   |
| Large town expansion: beyond green belt/normal growth |        |      |      |               |      |      |                  |      |      |                         |      |      |   |  |   |  |   |
| Town development, large/small: beyond green belt      | X      | X    | X    |               |      |      |                  |      |      |                         |      |      |   |  |   |  | X |
| New towns   | X      | X    | X    | X             | X    | X    |                  |      |      | X                       | X    | X    |   |  |   |  | X |

Pop. = Population growth  
 Emp. = Employment growth  
 Com. = Major commuting

\*Manchester

+Merseyside

X = Generalised growth characteristics



1. Town planning's main task is to reconcile competing claims for the use of limited land so as to provide a consistent, balanced and orderly arrangement of land uses.
2. Town planning's central function is to provide good (or better) physical environment; a physical environment of such good quality is essential for the promotion of a healthy civilised life.
3. Town planning, as part of a broader social programme, is responsible for providing the physical basis for better urban community life; the main ideals towards which town planning is to strive are (a) the provision of low density residential areas (b) the fostering of local community life and (c) the control of conurban growth.

The first ideology reflects political ambiguity, compromise and flexibility, implicitly accepting land use control in the public interest but not explicitly stating what this involves. Ambivalence also pervades the second ideology, where juxtaposition of physical determinism with social consequence suggest that the physical environment may be conceived either as an end or as intermediate to social goals. Both propositions may be subsumed in the third ideology which we adopt.

This social ideology hinges upon the belief that small, fairly low density developments offer the best form of community life, and is mirrored in space standards and articulation of land use aimed at a good micro environment. Its outcome is found in a dual set of interlocking propositions. On the one hand these involve containing the growth of conurbations and larger towns, both vertically (density controls) and horizontally (green belts), and also in terms of employment concentration (industrial location policy): on the other hand they involve the promotion of 'local' residential communities (as neighbourhood units or sectors within conurbations, and elsewhere as new/expanded towns) reasonably self-contained and socially



balanced in respect of facilities and work places with the object of minimising dormitory functions and commuting. But these propositions belong within the wider context of national action seeking to relieve the larger congested conurbations and to assist the less fortunate areas. Such a policy, Foley suggests, "can be effectively carried through only if regional and national planning are vigorously fostered as fully complementary to town planning in its more restricted sense" (p.79): the point is central to our theme and we return to it in Chapter 4.

The proposition that town planning is part of a broader social policy raises the question of what, if any, goals and objectives it is trying to fulfil: but "national goals have rarely been listed specifically as such, occurring more often implicitly in broader statements of political ideology" (Chadwick, 1971, p.140). In the absence of an official and explicit definition of town planning, or its goal(s), the mandate of the 1943 Act is perhaps the nearest substitute. This, amplified in the 1944 White Paper, and interpreted by the Schuster Committee (1950, para.49) as being "to regulate the use and development of land in such a way as to take account of social, economic and strategic objectives and to ensure that conflicting demands are reconciled in the best way possible in the national interest", has given its direction to British practice theory. In further substitution for any explicit statement of national goals/objectives we may look for guidance to various legislation, green and white papers, Parliamentary and informal statements by Ministers, recommendations of Royal Commissions and Committees, election manifestos and other sources. For example, the 1944 White Paper may also be seen as giving the Government's comprehensive view of national town planning objectives at that time, while a less formal view of the position in the mid-1960s could be inferred from the eight policy issues identified by the then Minister, R. H. S. Crossman (1965, p.207) as national/regional economic planning; further new towns; urban renewal; traffic in towns; conservation in town and country; green belts; development planning machinery; and public participation. And again, the Barlow recommendations,



the New Towns Act 1946, the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, and the green belt circular (M.H.L.G. 42/55) might all be cited as national expressions of intent which, because they have gained political support, could be regarded as representative and acceptable.

But are alternatives sufficiently examined and analysed?<sup>1</sup> The lack of positive, explicit direction in terms of goals/objectives makes it difficult to establish performance criteria against which progress or retrogression in the system may be assessed, and in the absence of alternatives how do we decide and evaluate? Hall (1973, 2, pp.38-39) argues that, because of "an obsession with plan design, in the form of a physical blueprint", British town planning has pursued only limited objectives on the basis of physical criteria which he classifies according to spatial scale. At national scale, there is the idea of maintaining a nationwide regional balance. At regional scale, urban containment, protection of the countryside and natural resources, and the creation of self-contained and balanced communities are supported by the subsidiary objectives of preventing scattered development and establishing strong service centres. And at local scale, reconciliation of the aims of accessibility and good environment has been sought through a preferred urban structure. There are, Hall (pp.393-405) suggests, four main results of the 1947 system - urban containment, suburbanisation, land inflation and economic restraint - although the extent to which these were intended/unintended or acceptable/unacceptable cannot be evaluated readily. Rodwin (1956), for example, drew attention to new towns policy failures, asserting that "new towns are being built without any long-range analysis of how many should be built and where they should be built and of what priorities should govern the growth of different regions" (p.70).

In lieu of any explicit official analysis of such matters, Sir Colin Buchanan (1972, pp.42-43) put forward his own "five grand objectives" of

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<sup>1</sup>For example, within what national strategic parameters are decisions made on feasibility studies for planned expansion and overspill schemes?



British town planning<sup>1</sup> and intuitive evaluation of these: he considered that notable successes included the machinery itself, new towns, national parks, and assistance to development areas, while among the failures were an inadequate integration of land use planning with social and economic policies, an insufficient supply of residential accommodation and an inability to deal with transportation in an integrated way (pp.60-61).<sup>2</sup>

But, as illustrated by Gerald Manners (1972, pp.15-39, 47-61), macro scale public policy responses to such objectives have depended on sectoral 'related' legislation as much as on the comprehensive town planning precept. These responses, as reflected in Britain's twofold national spatial socio-economic patterning, include restraint on economic growth, constraint on physical expansion and overspill arrangements, together with action in respect of urban transport, urban renewal and the geographical organisation of planning in the more prosperous regions: characteristic of the less prosperous regions are national economic management, support for staple industries and development area policies manifested in the 'geography of assistance' (including improvements to infrastructure and environment). Again, the Ministry of Transport has exemplified a strongly sectoral approach to many matters requiring to be brought under comprehensive land planning control.<sup>3</sup> It therefore seems necessary to clarify the role of town planning as a national policy instrument and to establish goals, objectives and performance criteria

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<sup>1</sup>These may be summarised as (a) ensuring quality of opportunity, prosperity and standards throughout the whole country; (b) getting the urban areas in shape because their quality and economic viability affect the contentment of the lives that are led in them; (c) ensuring a sufficient and economical transport system; (d) conserving the nation's natural resources of agricultural land, water, atmosphere and minerals; and (e) conserving the nation's heritage, mainly its countryside, landscapes, and buildings.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Heap (1961).

<sup>3</sup>For example, the aim "to provide a comprehensive national system of trunk roads on which commercial traffic and private cars can move freely and safely and on which congestion and the frustration and economic costs it creates will have been virtually eliminated" (M.O.T., 1970, para.2).



so that its activities may be better understood and their effectiveness assessed.

From an administrative/procedural standpoint, Britain's town planning system has been described as (a) highly centralised; (b) comprehensive; (c) largely discretionary; and (d) highly integrated (Jones, 1964, pp.20-21). It may be discretionary, but in terms of a coherent, unitary approach at national scale it is questionable to what extent the other qualities are met. For example, in view of the complementarity of 'policy' and 'plan'<sup>1</sup> as means of securing ends, and the need for "consistency and continuity in the framing and execution of a national policy", can the claim of comprehensiveness be justified when there is no overall indicative 'plan'? The absence of active involvement in physical planning and plan-making at macro scale is illustrated in Table 3.3 and Figure 3.4 which reinforce the view that although "central government has a major responsibility for policy formulation in regard to town planning, [this] proceeds so much from the bottom upwards in Britain that policy is often more fully expressed in reactions ... to specific proposals or decisions by local authorities ... than in advance, general policy statements by the central government" (Foley, 1960, pp.72-73).

The question therefore arises as to whether ad hoc policy-making per se at national scale is an adequate means of securing town planning ends in a wider process of seeking to use and develop finite land resources to the best socio-economic advantage, or whether it "must be accompanied by a positive conception of what is desirable" (Schuster, 1950, para.44). But, as Buchanan (1972, pp.46-47) says, central government interferes minimally with the making of local plans which "it was hoped would add up to the big ones

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<sup>1</sup> 'Policy' is defined as a "course of action adopted by government, party etc." and 'plan' as "scheme of arrangement; project, design; way of proceeding" (Oxford English Dictionary). In a national town planning context we take the term 'plan' to mean a policy instrument which will express measures for dealing with the macro structuring of the physical environment in the form of (a) a coherent, comprehensive 'bundle' or synthesis of policies in town planning per se and 'related' areas and (b) more specific proposals for a strategy for the use and development of the national territory.



Table 3.3 Interventionist characteristics in British town planning

Source: original

| Nature of intervention | Spatial scale |          |          |
|------------------------|---------------|----------|----------|
|                        | Local*        | Regional | National |
| Social                 | X             | X        | ?        |
| Economic               | X             | XX       | XX       |
| Physical               | XX            | X        |          |
| Executive              | XX            |          | XX       |
| Advisory               | X             | XX       | XX       |
| Policy-making          | XX            | XX       | XX       |
| Plan-making            | XX            | X        |          |
| Public participation   | XX            |          |          |

\* Includes structure and local planning in statutory terms

XX Strong characteristic

X Weak characteristic



| Spatial scale | Components of development planning system                                   |   |
|---------------|---|---|
|               | 1947 Act  | 1968 Act                                      |
| National      |   | National policy/strategy                      |
| Regional      |   | REGIONAL POLICY/STRATEGY                      |
| Sub-regional  | COUNTY MAP  | STRUCTURE PLAN (COUNTY)                       |
| Urban         | TOWN MAP  | STRUCTURE PLAN (URBAN)                        |
| Local         | Comprehensive Development Area<br>Supplementary Town Map<br>Inset Map, etc. | Local Plan<br>District Action Area<br>Subject |

Figure 3.4 Spatial progress of statutory development planning in Britain: 1947-1968

Source: original

Statutory development plan ——— Mandatory components TOWN MAP  
 Contextual plan - - - - - Discretionary components Action area

without the government having to make embarrassing overall decisions [and] to this day we do not have ... a national plan, not even in the form of a statement of policies and objectives, let alone any set of proposals defined on a map. This might be thought a strange state of affairs [since planning] cries out for ... broad policies ... so that lesser matters can find their places; and it [is] a matter for criticism that after 25 years of planning effort not only is there no national plan but there is not even a coherent set of regional plans". If then, as the Schuster Committee (1950, para.72) suggests, town planning aims "to create a well balanced synthesis of what might otherwise be a mere collection of separate policies and claims, to combine them into one consistent policy for the use and development of land within the area in question [and] to devise the means of translating this policy in the physical conditions of that area into a plan", we would argue that the 1943 Act implies the need for a national plan.

In British town planning we discern, then, a marked difference between expectations of the 'centre' and happenings at the 'periphery' (Schon, 1970) and an absence of comprehensive macro plan-making complemented, somewhat paradoxically, by an adaptively oriented central approach. We therefore also find a lack of positive and coherent national context for sub-national planning and of explicit central guidance. This may mean that the 'centre' is deficient in terms of technical/predictive expertise, of adequate public policy instruments for guiding change at the 'periphery', and the necessary political will to intervene.<sup>1</sup> It certainly underlines the need to consider whether the most effective resource planning procedures are being applied at national scale or whether a more vigorous role is required of central government so that it develops "responsibility for catalysing social goals and fully analysing what physical environment improvements most realistically facilitated

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<sup>1</sup>These deficiencies represent a considerable divergence from some of the theoretical concepts outlined in Chapter 2 such as Ozbekhan's planning/environment/purpose/plan construct; Ruth Glass's integrated enterprise; Banfield's means/ends relationship; and Wilson's goals/action specification.



these social goals", while not weakening its approach to planning as "an adapting-to-new-circumstances activity" (Foley, 1960, pp.91-92).

Before turning, in Chapter 4, to a fuller examination of the regional and national facets of British town planning, with our ultimate interest focused on cells I-3B and II-3B in Figure 2.3, we conclude that, in many respects, Britain has well-developed comprehensive town planning machinery to deal with the use and development of land. However, socio-economic events, such as population growth and industrial expansion, were not adequately anticipated after World War II, and means of control, not being geared to dealing with the unexpected impacts on the physical system, also had shortcomings. Thus, although strong influence over land use and development was exerted through comprehensive plan-making at local level, this was not paralleled at regional or national levels. Eventually, increasing pressures on the physical environment demanded a more broadly-based approach which led to increased activity (ad hoc and official) at sub-regional and regional levels and to the 'new' development plan system, but there is, as yet, no contextual national strategy.

We find a situation, therefore, in which in some matters - such as nationwide coverage in terms of local scale development plan and control procedures - there has been a clear national town planning policy. But, in other respects - new towns, distribution of industry, the countryside, transport - central government has adopted a sectoral rather than comprehensive approach, and has not sought a co-ordinated strategy for the physical structuring of the country as a whole. Furthermore, there has been no explicit articulation of national goals/objectives for the physical environment, nor formulation and evaluation of alternative national futures. Thus, while it cannot be denied that there is national policy in the town planning field, this does not amount to a coherent, overall national town planning policy and there is no national plan. Consequently, there appears to be room for more positive unitary guidance from central government at national level: this, we

suggest, requires an appropriate macro policy instrument and provides a strong argument for an indicative national physical plan.



## Chapter 4

### REGIONAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING IN BRITAIN

The proposition that town planning is part of a broader social policy which will only be effective if regional and national planning are actively pursued, lends weight to the idea of an indicative national physical plan. While there is much overlap between these two spatial scales, each has an increasingly evident identity: this chapter analyses regional (Section A) and national (Section B) approaches in British town planning (examining their origins, purpose and characteristics) and, in so doing, attempts to differentiate the particular field of national planning.

#### A. THE REGIONAL FACET

The intermediate nature of regional planning in Britain between local/global and national/sectoral approaches has resulted, as A. J. Brown (1972, p.31) puts it, in a "mixed bag". The two conceptions of regional and sub-regional planning identified in Chapter 2 have been applied to different problems and are typified in contrasting approaches, intellectual stimuli and public policy responses.

Sub-regional planning, by tradition physically oriented and socially motivated, centres upon the large urban complex and its hinterland with their functional/hierarchical interactions: it seeks to alleviate problems of congestion and poor environment, both through renewal and density controls, and through decentralisation to new and expanded communities. The unit of definition is the city/urban region: the approach has developed through joint committees under the 1932 Act, the advisory plans of the 1940s (which powerfully influenced both local development planning and national government policy in respect of dispersal, new towns and green belts) and more recently a spate of collaborative sub-regional studies.



Regional planning, by tradition economically oriented and socio-politically motivated, sought to combat unemployment, industrial stagnation and decline by redressing regional socio-economic disparities which the locational incidence of these problems created in the country as a whole. It was, at first, centrally and sectorally sponsored through economic agencies, but since issues concerning the national economy and its regionalisation involved physical/spatial/global considerations, a multiple objective approach has emerged.<sup>1</sup> The unit is the homogenous region: the approach has evolved from inter-war economic crises, the full employment philosophy of Beveridge, the White Paper 'Employment Policy' (Minister of Reconstruction, 1944) and post-war legislation relating to the distribution of industry. Its traditional focus was aid to the less prosperous areas through factory construction, loans, provision of services, land reclamation and grants. However, this sectoral economic method has broadened over the last decade through the regional economic planning machinery and major strategic studies.

The 1960s saw both aspects of regional planning become increasingly entwined. The need for a common approach, transcending administrative boundaries, and the lack of adequate context for 1947 Act development plans, led the Ministry to initiate regional studies.<sup>2</sup> The aim, says Baroness Sharp (1969, pp.178-179), was "to establish trends and indentify needs for the next twenty years; and to formulate ... on a wide regional basis, the broad outlines for future policy which the local planning authorities could apply to the review of their own development plans". Meanwhile, cyclic economic crises, the magnitude of the regional problem at home

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<sup>1</sup>The process has involved the Treasury and a varied pattern of government departments including, notably, the Board of Trade; the Ministry of Housing and Local Government; and the Departments of Economic Affairs, Trade and Industry and the Environment.

<sup>2</sup>For the pressure areas of South East and West Midlands.



and European influences (McCrone, 1969; Brown, 1972) further encouraged regionalism, including plans designed to "become part of the national economic plan [and] intended to produce a more comprehensive approach to regional development ..." (Self, 1967, p.5). The Department of Economic Affairs became responsible for regional development in 1964 and for regional studies. However, although "realistic plans for land use in a region have to be based, among other things, on assumptions about economic growth ... the immediate, practical urgency of regional studies [is] the need to determine the pattern of land use and the transport ... on which the public authorities and others can get to work" (Sharp, 1969, pp.179-180): hence the principal responsibility for regional planning passed to the Department of the Environment in 1970. Since the mid-1960s there have been numerous regional and sub-regional studies pursuant to the economic and physical planning interests of central government and ad hoc bodies:<sup>1</sup> there has also been, as we shall see, advocacy of more positive and coherent central guidance.

Regionalism, as a spatial facet of the national scene which aims to bridge central and local levels of government, "involves the formulation of public policy for, and administration of policy in, large geographical units" defined by varied criteria (Smith, 1965, 1, p.2). As far back as the early 1900s, the ineffectiveness of small local government units in dealing with emerging social/technological problems led the Fabian Society (Sanders, 1905) to propose a unified regional approach to the management of public utility services through a "new heptarchy" of English provinces with elected councils.<sup>2</sup> The search for political and administrative rationality through regionalism found intellectual support in the academic

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<sup>1</sup>Mainly standing conferences or joint local planning authority committees.

<sup>2</sup>Related by Geddes (1915) to the major conurbations.



disciplines of geography, economics and sociology: at the end of World War I there was strong advocacy - by, for example, H. J. E. Peake, C. B. Fawcett and H. J. Mackinder (Smith, 1965, 2, pp.8-11) - of devolution from central government to balanced provinces comprising organic units defined on geographical and social factors. In 1921, G. D. H. Cole "explored the geographical, political and social arguments for regionalism and advocated the division of England into nine regions or provinces which would reflect the economic and social structure of the country and its administrative problems more accurately than the existing areas of local authorities" (Smith, 1965, 2, p.9). At the same time the Ministry of Health devised a plan for twelve housing regions reflecting communities of economic interest.

As a means towards more efficient local government and greater devolution from central government, regionalism has enjoyed continued support, being considered a necessary vehicle for democratic economic planning (Grove, 1951), for large scale administration (Robson, 1954), and for town planning functions in an extensive area "that for geographical or technical reasons need integration throughout it" (Self, 1949, p.75). More recently and specifically the Maud Commission (1969) laid emphasis on large authorities and the city region concept, the case for which "rests on the argument that it is the geographical form taken by modern socio-economic activity and, if the pattern of local government is to match the pattern of people's lives, then the city region must be the basic planning unit in the new local government system" (para.115).

The town planning approach, centred upon the process of urban regionalism and developed over the years (Geddes, 1915; Abercrombie, 1944; James, 1962, 1967), is now well established in British practice theory. It owes much to geography and its attempts to describe and understand the spatial differentiation of human/environmental causality and interrelationships as reflected in social, economic and physical terms,



including such fields as regional definition (Fawcett, 1961; Gilbert, 1960; Taylor, 1950), city and conurban systems (Fawcett, 1932; Taylor, 1938; Freeman, 1966; Dickinson, 1964) and urban fields and hierarchies (Christaller, 1933; Smailes, 1944, 1946, 1947; Green, 1950; Carruthers, 1957; Berry, 1967). And in regional economics both geographers and economists have made notable contributions in location theory and analysis (Losch, 1940; Hoover, 1948; Isard, 1956; Clark, 1966; Hermansen, 1971; Chisholm and Manners, 1971).<sup>1</sup>

It is not easy to define the evolving role of the regional plan in British town planning (Lichfield, 1967) but, as Hall (1970) says, it largely deals with resource objectives, both in its economic orientation and its increasing concern for urban process.<sup>2</sup> Certainly it seems to call for a more "vivid dialogue between the politician and the planner" (Kuklinski, 1970, p.272) and a clearer articulation of the substantive physical propositions with which it might deal (Friedmann, 1964, p.62).<sup>3</sup> The Strategic Plan for the South East (South East Joint Planning Team, 1970a, para.1.14) emphasises its intermediate position as "on the one hand ... an extension of local planning, dealing particularly with those matters - the movement and distribution of population and employment; the complex interaction of social and economic needs, the provision of major recreational facilities and the main communications network, for example - which can only be decided for areas much larger than the areas of existing local planning authorities. On the other hand it is concerned with interregional flows

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<sup>1</sup>For overviews see Haggett (1966) and McCrone (1969, pp.49-74).

<sup>2</sup>The former might include welfare, equality and influence through high employment, equal opportunities, and central place benefits; the latter economic, aesthetic and social satisfaction by investment decisions, preserving the countryside and improving community structure (pp.32-33, 46-47).

<sup>3</sup>In summary, these propositions are that (a) the structure of human settlements can be defined as a system nodes and functional linkages; (b) nodes are arranged into a loose hierarchical structure; (c) surrounding each node is a density field of functional interaction; and (d) the cost of overcoming distance exerts a pervasive influence on the distribution of activities.



of population and employment, with the availability and use of resources, and with long term economic prospects which cannot properly be considered except in the context of the balance to be achieved between growth in one region and growth required in other parts of the country, on which only the Government can decide".

Developing relationships in regional planning have caused an increasing awareness of national context.<sup>1</sup> Sub-regionalism is recognised in the structure planning provisions of the 1968 Act which enables collaborative planning across administrative boundaries (M.H.L.G., 1970, para.3.2) taking into account "spheres of influence [and] hierarchical relationships between centres of different size" (para.3.7). The regional facet has also, obliquely, gained statutory recognition in the 1968 Act (S.2(4)(a)) as a context for structure plans, and may derive continuing impetus from the Maud and Kilbrandon Reports. But, if it is to succeed, regional planning must be set within a procedural framework which denies the suggestions that there is "little likelihood that the aspirations or proposals of individual regions will be compatible with each other or within the nation's capability when taken in the aggregate"; that "regional strategies seem to be prepared only to be ignored"; and that we are incapable of "producing plans which neatly dovetail with each other and with the National Plan" (McCrone, 1969, p.276). This reference to Lord George Brown's economic plan of 1965 is equally applicable to our consideration here of an indicative national physical plan: the next section examines approaches and developments at the macro level, which alone can provide context for regions.

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<sup>1</sup>Clearly, "many of the most important decisions ... can only be taken at the national level where the priorities of different regions can be seen in perspective [through] consultation between regional and national authorities. The former identifying the problems and making proposals ..., the latter reconciling the demands of competing regions. Moreover, the problems of one region might easily require a solution to be found in another ..." (McCrone, 1969, pp.227-228).



## B. THE NATIONAL FACET

Although the 1943 Act required a national policy with respect to the use and development of land, although events of the early 1940s suggested that comprehensive town planning might include a national plan-making role, and although there has been centralised policy formulation, national planning in Britain - if it can be said to exist as such - hinges upon intervention in the economy.

Because of British traditions of a free enterprise democracy dominated by the market and *laissez faire*, it was not until the depression of the 1920s and early 1930s produced a series of crises that Government intervention in the economy became a central political issue. The basic problem was seen as unemployment, and, as Government sought to tackle this, Lord Keynes (1936) revolutionised economic thinking with his theme that speculation was no substitute for planning - "when the capital development of a country becomes a by-product of the activities of a casino, the job is likely to be ill-done" (p.159). Since aggregate demand for output determines total production, and as no market forces can ensure that this will be high enough to guarantee full employment, there emerges a clear case for intervention by government, not only on economic but also on social and political grounds.

It is not our intention here to debate the political pros and cons of different centralist planning models although we acknowledge that the character of the planning movement is largely conditioned by the influence and interaction of politics and ideologies. But for purposes of our thesis, we assume, as successive British governments have variously accepted, the need for state intervention. As to the form which this regulation and control could take, we put forward the view by Sir Geoffrey Vickers (1972, pp.138-139) of methods which government might use to implement, *inter alia*, its responsibility "for managing large sections of the economy, and for the physical development of the country, including the siting and building of



new towns and airports". It may alter the rules by which society lives; restrain private activity; implement policies directly; control through fiscal management; influence private actions by financial manipulations; control trade and industry; and influence the attitude of the governed: it may exercise and control the exercise of power; shape the pattern of legal right; persuade; bargain; and coerce.

In the early 1930s there was a strong intellectual response to the country's socio-economic problems, not least from Political and Economic Planning which organisation prepared 'A National Plan for Great Britain'. It was economic in character and "a National Planning Commission, aided by a Bureau of Statistics and by a Planning Council in each industry, was to produce a master plan for British economic development" with particular reference to "commerce, industry, agriculture and transport" (P.E.P., 1956, p.143). But more significance was the growing official view - as expressed, for example, by the Special Areas Commissioner, Sir Malcolm Stewart - that restraint of development in congested areas to secure a more even distribution of industry was a necessary complement to the amelioration of the regional problem (McCrone, 1969, p.102). In response, the Government appointed the Barlow Commission "to enquire into the causes which have influenced the present geographical distribution of the industrial population of Great Britain and the probable direction of any change in that distribution in the future; to consider what social economic or strategic disadvantages arise from the concentration of industries or of the industrial population in large towns or in particular areas of the country; and to report what remedial measures if any should be taken in the national interest".

The Barlow Commission (1940) claimed that "it is only by proper planning that the disadvantages of the existing grouping of the population can be avoided, and life with full enjoyment of amenity, health and convenience be led" (para.218). But town planning ignored "the larger question of the general and national grouping of the population" (para.219),



and the Commission saw the need for some central authority with "a national point of view ... considering local or regional planning schemes in the light of national resources, requirements or interests as a whole ... with effective responsibilities for national planning and with the duty of watching, stimulating and guiding local and regional planning" (para.221). Aggregated local and regional schemes "would not, however, constitute a national plan in the true sense: it would be nothing more than ... a patchwork of schemes ... which had not been co-ordinated and moulded to form a coherent whole. A national plan conceived as a whole would be likely to differ substantially from a national plan constructed by merely piecing together the local and regional plans. The local and national interests may easily clash" (para.222).<sup>1</sup> Therefore, solutions to locational problems having a national character "must be sought along the lines of national inquiry and national guidance" (para.427).

Among its conclusions (para.428) the Commission found the need for national action and for a new Central Authority, "national in scope and character", which should have a policy/plan formulation role with power to correlate regional and local plans in the national interest. But there was disagreement as to whether the new authority should be advisory (para.432) or have much wider powers (Minority Report, para.6), and in a Dissident Memorandum Sir Patrick Abercrombie stressed the fully comprehensive approach. National controls "must be integrated into regional and local planning in all their aspects [and] a proper pattern and design must be given to human environment, so that not only economic but social and artistic needs may be

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Scott Committee (1942): a "fundamental deficiency" is the lack of "principles of national planning which ought to be applied". Regional schemes were not "parts of a coherent whole ... fitting into a national plan, or complying with the criteria of the many national interests involved in all planning for the utilisation of the nation's land" (para.149).



satisfied. The components of such an outline scheme of national development<sup>1</sup> should be similar to those of a normal local planning scheme ~~but~~ rather a policy than a plan, something flexible and continually evolving, based upon research, surveys and experience" (paras.6-13).

A centralist model was also advocated by the Scott Committee (1942) which recommended new government machinery for "the formulation of national planning principles ... and the translation of national policy into concrete terms of national planning", though not as "a single fixed plan" (para.221). The need for "national land planning" (para.228) wherein "a national plan must be a continuous and flexible application of governmental policy" (para.229), based on broad national land classification rather than zoning (paras.229-232), was accepted. Similarly the Uthwatt Committee (1942) said that a system lacking "central positive direction is inadequate to secure the best social use of the land of the country" (para.15). It was assumed "that national planning ... will be directed to ensuring that the best use is made of land with a view to securing economic efficiency for the community and well being for the individual" (para.17), bearing "national as well as local considerations in mind" (para.359). Also "there should exist means by which ... all land uses can be ... considered as a whole", for unless they are, "the general lines on which National Development should proceed cannot be properly determined nor the lands properly managed in the interests of National Development" (para.360).

We have quoted from these three reports at some length to illustrate the point that Britain seemed to be on the point of adopting a 'total approach' to town planning in which a national plan would have been logical

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<sup>1</sup>These would include (a) industrial and commercial location; (b) agriculture and forestry; (c) grouping of the population and resulting settlement fabric; (d) transport; (e) recreation; (f) fuel and power; (g) drainage and water supply; and (h) other services. Cf. Development Plans Manual (M.H.L.G., 1970) and S.I. 1971 No. 1109.



to those who "saw town planning not just as technique for controlling the layout and design of residential areas, but as part of a policy of national economic and social planning" (Cullingworth, 1972, p.21).<sup>1</sup> It appeared that the proposal by Lord Reith (1949, p.422) for "a central authority to frame and be responsible for the execution of a national plan covering the basic objectives [including] regional machinery to apply the national plan" was near to reality. But this did not occur. Thus, while the 1947 Act established comprehensive local planning, the regional scale was ignored and the national scale was dependent upon a "web of official pronouncements that collectively amount to policy" (Foley, 1960, p.73) and upon a fragmented series of adaptive sectoral measures. It did not occur for largely political reasons - inter alia, because "an all-powerful 'grand co-ordinating' Ministry does not square with the facts of administrative and political life" (Cullingworth, 1972, p.37), because of laissez-faire traditions and because, despite the fact that "national affairs occupy the centre of the stage" (Jennings, 1962, p.104), a national plan might have clashed with and antagonised local interests.

However, the idea of a national plan persisted. Cole (1947) proposed regional "master plans for the balanced development of extensive areas, including both towns and country, and for the distribution of industry and population within these areas", and that these should be subject to "an overriding national plan<sup>2</sup> drawn up centrally" (p.75). Thus, regional plans

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<sup>1</sup>For example, W. R. Davidge "was urging that a planned decentralisation policy must be preceded by a national study ..." based upon which a national plan should consider (a) conservation and agriculture; (b) minerals and major industries; (c) commercial development; (d) urban and rural development; (e) public services; (f) transport facilities of national importance; and (g) the national heritage and economy (Ashworth, 1968, pp.201-202).

<sup>2</sup>Involving definition of "the character of the industrial, commercial and agricultural developments ... to secure a balanced economic and social structure ... with estimates of the capital needed, both for the directly economic part of the plan and for the parallel provision of the necessary houses ... and other social investments required", together with proposals for "new towns and industrial estates, for the improvement of facilities for transport, and of ports, docks and harbours, and for ... utilities" (p.76).



would be co-ordinated through "a National Planning Authority, which would have to bring them into sensible relation one to another and to the population and resources of the country as a whole" (p.77). This argument has been pursued more recently by Hall (1970, pp.63-64): "national/regional planning is concerned very much with the allocation of national resources between regions" and a co-ordinated national framework is needed because "it makes no sense to help one region if at the same time you are not considering the relationship between the policies for that region and the policies for other regions, in fact all other regions. It follows from this that normally national/regional planning is a matter for central government policy [dealing] with the relation between the centre or the whole of the nation and its regional parts".

Although Britain still has no national plan, there was a revival of interest at the macro scale in the 1960s: the consequences have been considerable and are still developing. A first step was the creation of the National Economic Development Council in 1961 whose report, 'Conditions Favourable to Faster Growth' (N.E.D.C., 1963), advocated a regional development programme emphasising growth points within the general pattern of assistance. Among major problems identified were outward migration and high production costs, some of the causes of which were clearly capable of being tackled through physical/spatial public policy responses.

A year after the creation of the Department of Economic Affairs in 1964 and the setting up of regional economic planning councils (Figure 4.1), 'The National Plan' (D.E.A., 1965) was published "to provide the basis for greater economic growth" (p.1). It displayed considerable awareness of the importance of physical/spatial elements and, referring to the need to "ensure that regional planning becomes an integral part of national planning", it showed a specific concern with "the infrastructure of the economy, and with the location of employment and population" (p.84). Its approach, including "control over expansion in some parts of the country and measures





Figure 4.1 United Kingdom: The economic planning regions

Source: Turnbull (1967)



to promote development in others" (p.100), reinforced the accepted Barlow philosophy and, although its physical planning content represented only one facet among many, it appeared to offer a basis for greater cohesion at national scale. However, as a centralist planning model it was never implemented, partly because of technical problems, but chiefly because of a political failure to resolve the debate concerning objectives, ideological ambiguities, and the extent to which government intervention was practicable and desirable.

There were, nevertheless, as Baroness Sharp (1969, p.181) points out with regard to the town planning work of central government, very real practical and procedural difficulties in that "some planning questions are national in scale. For many years the Ministry was hardly conscious of a national aspect to its problems. The need to think nationally was first forced on it by population and transport problems [which raised] land use problems on a national scale and the Ministry ... having once learned to think nationally, now does so more frequently and more naturally".

But the fact remains that there is no coherent, comprehensive policy instrument, nor agency,<sup>1</sup> through which national thinking can be expressed. We therefore agree with Amos (1971, p.307) that "in central government one would hope to see the development of a national plan, which would give direction to the constituent dependents of government, and to the local planning authorities which must observe national policy". We also believe that there is greater scope for such a plan than Amos concedes in his view that "while it is possible and desirable that national policies should be expressed at least in part through a national physical strategy, it is unlikely that any national physical plan will do much more than indicate a geographical distribution of resources for certain policies". This we

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. the idea of a 'Central Council for the Physical Environment' (Buchanan, 1964).



seek to demonstrate in Part II of the study by developing the idea of an indicative national physical plan, arguing that there is clearly a need for an enhanced role for town planning - and for this type of policy instrument at national level - to deal with the physical implications of national resource management (Figure 4.2).

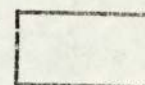


| Socio-economic/environmental continuum |                         |           |
|--|-------------------------|-----------|
| Space                                  | Physical infrastructure | Resources |
| Local                                  |                         |           |
| Regional                               |                         |           |
| National                               |                         |           |

Figure 4.2 National physical planning: a conceptual view

Source: original

Focus of indicative  
national physical planning





Part II

TOWARDS AN INDICATIVE NATIONAL PHYSICAL PLAN FOR BRITAIN

"A national strategic framework ... cannot be built up by aggregating regional plans any more than regional plans can be built up by aggregating structure plans".

Wilfred Burns (1971)

"Now it is not one thing nor another alone  
Makes a poem, but rather the general tone,  
The something pervading, uniting the whole ...  
Roots, wood, bark and leaves singly perfect may be,  
But, clapped hodge-podge together, they don't make a tree".

James Russell Lowell



A NATIONAL STRATEGIC NEED?

Part I of the study has pointed to the view that a national physical strategy for Britain is necessary, having regard to the mandate of the 1943 Act, to the expectations of the 'new' development plan system, to the spatially integrated nature of plan-making, to evolving trends in government and to the importance of coherent and effective national resource utilisation.

Professor Arthur Ling (1968, p.419) discerns "fumbling steps towards regional and national planning" and believes that the Government "has, or should have, its own responsibilities for preparing a national physical plan or framework into which regional plans can fit". It has been argued that a primary weakness in British planning has been its "failure to establish ... a comprehensive plan for the better use of national resources in land, capital and manpower" (McCulloch, 1965, p.9): yet, as Professor D. J. Robertson (1965, pp.12-13) suggests, physical planning is a necessary element at national level in "a realistic assessment of the demand upon the resources of the economy". This chapter introduces our approach in Part II towards town planning as a national resource objective and the concept of an indicative national physical plan as a public policy instrument to this end.

Justification for such an approach is the need to secure the most effective use of resources in the 'national good' so far as their development may be facilitated by town planning practice theory (Cowan, 1970; Chisholm, 1972). In this context, P.E.P. (1941, p.5) suggested, at the time of Barlow, that successful town planning "depends upon the clear enunciation and general acceptance of principles of social and economic policy touching the use of land [and] for determining and promoting the best use of land as between competing claims". Thirty years later Amos (1971, pp.305-306)<sup>1</sup> stressed the importance of resources vis-à-vis the planning roles of central and local

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Bor (1970) who stresses the importance of the national scale in resource allocation for the physical environment.



government: "local and national strategies must be compatible with each other and based on a realistic allocation of resources. It is possible and certainly desirable that the next achievement in central/local government relations will be a more systematic method of matching resource needs to resource supply on the basis of the possibility and effectiveness of plans". Resource allocation at central government level extends across all national activities, including land use, and "is not only a necessary part of effective planning; it is also a major part of corporate management". Much attention has been devoted recently to the environment as a resource in relation to conservation, countryside, pollution and energy: the greatest need, however, appears to be for a fully integrated approach to the functioning of the environment as a national whole. A national strategic framework would be an almost inevitable corollary of this.

About 12% of national output is devoted to development, renewal and maintenance of the urban environment, which not only makes large demands on fixed supplies of land, but also involves conflict between the material standards and the quality of life sought by the community. P. A. Stone (1970b, p.31) reminds us that "one of the more important restraints on the developing pattern of urbanisation is the availability of resources, both real and financial": though representing a form of consumption goods, the environment also consists of productive goods, and its utility will depend as much upon the manner in which resources are used as on the amount available. Development planning proposals should satisfy three tests at national, regional and local levels: first, do they offer good value; second, are the necessary real resources available; and third, can financial resources be provided and appropriately directed? Resource supply/demand is a function of the interaction of population and human activities on natural resources: thus size and composition of the population, and the nature and pattern of activities, will condition both national output and the total requirements for the built environment in terms of land use and its detailed physical components.



The implications of the conflict between pressures and land resources are well known (Best and Coppock, 1962; Stamp, 1962; Cracknell, 1967; Best and Champion, 1970; D.O.E., 1971). Distribution of urbanisation and policy/physical restraints on development in Britain (Figure 5.1), together with population projection to 1981 (Figure 5.2), indicates that in some regions pressures are slight, while in others, future growth will pose problems in the provision of urban and recreational space: residential land prices reflect this pattern (Figure 5.3) and emphasise the difficulties facing the axial belt. Town planning at national scale should be able to assist by trying to understand and positively influence the way in which these pressures are a function of, and their accommodation can be facilitated by, macro physical patterning.

Demands on land for urbanisation are mainly satisfied by using agricultural land. Best farmland should, ideally, be protected, but is usually most suitable for development and located in the pressure areas, while poorer land which could absorb leisure demands is more remote and uneconomic to develop. This model broadly correlates with the pattern of regional disparity but it belies the complexity of the situation wherein, as Professor Emrys Jones (1970, p.57) suggests, "many resources are already being extensively used and contribute to a relatively stable pattern of settlement which would be difficult to change. Although technology<sup>1</sup> and society are dynamic, the environmental base is relatively fixed". Thus, developmental demands for major new facilities and locational requirements<sup>2</sup> have to be reconciled with a well-established social, economic and physical framework, always bearing in mind the considerable flexibility in the built environment to adapt to changes in life styles.

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<sup>1</sup> Bayliss (1970) foresees developments in transportation, materials/structures, public utilities and services (e.g. cheap inter-urban transport, off-shore sites for obtrusive users) "beyond the urban horizon" (p.182).

<sup>2</sup> For example, estuarine petro-chemicals, growth points, large scale break in bulk and rapid transit services.



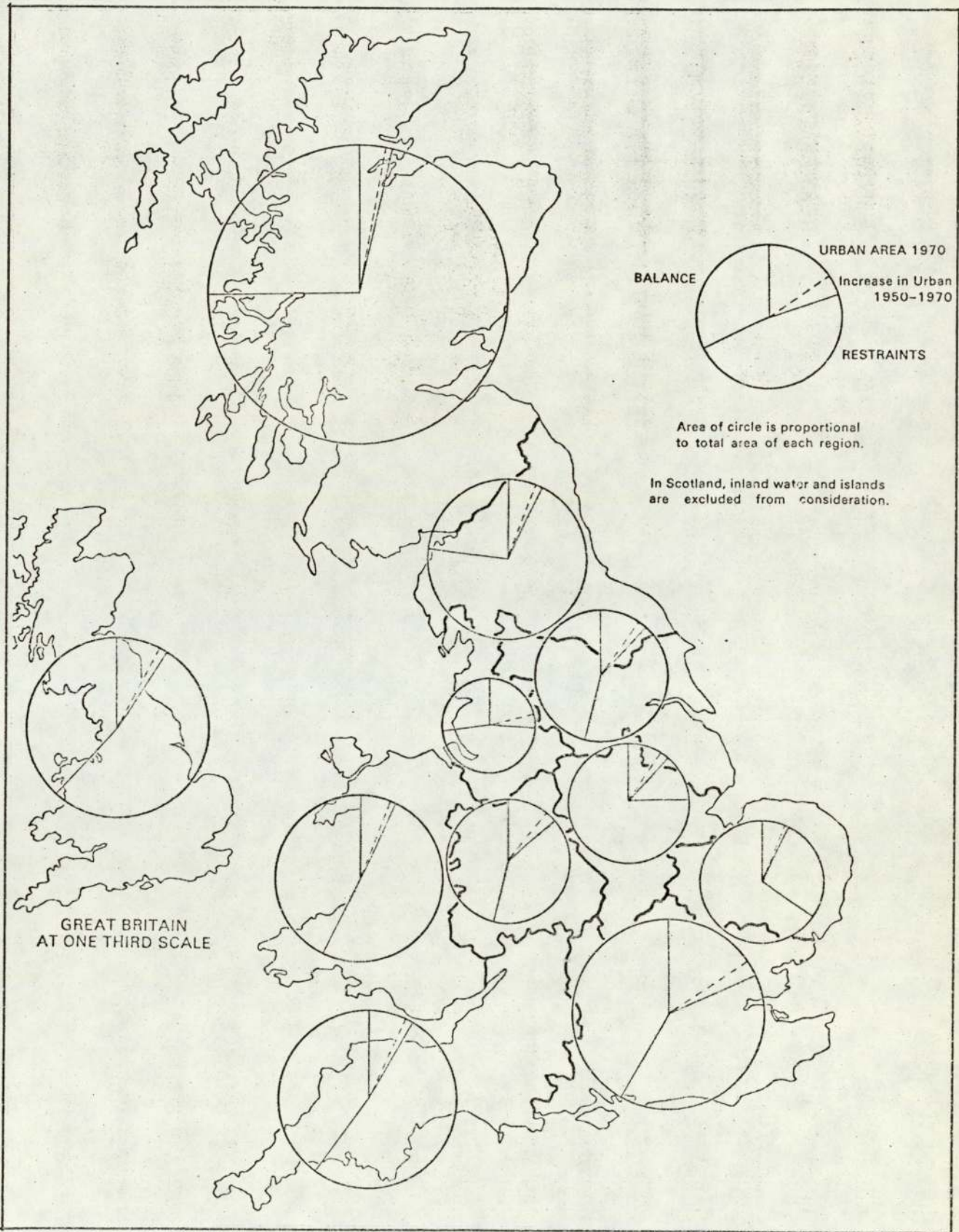


Figure 5.1 Britain: Urbanisation - regional distribution of urban land, recent increases and restraints to future development

Source: D.O.E. (1971)



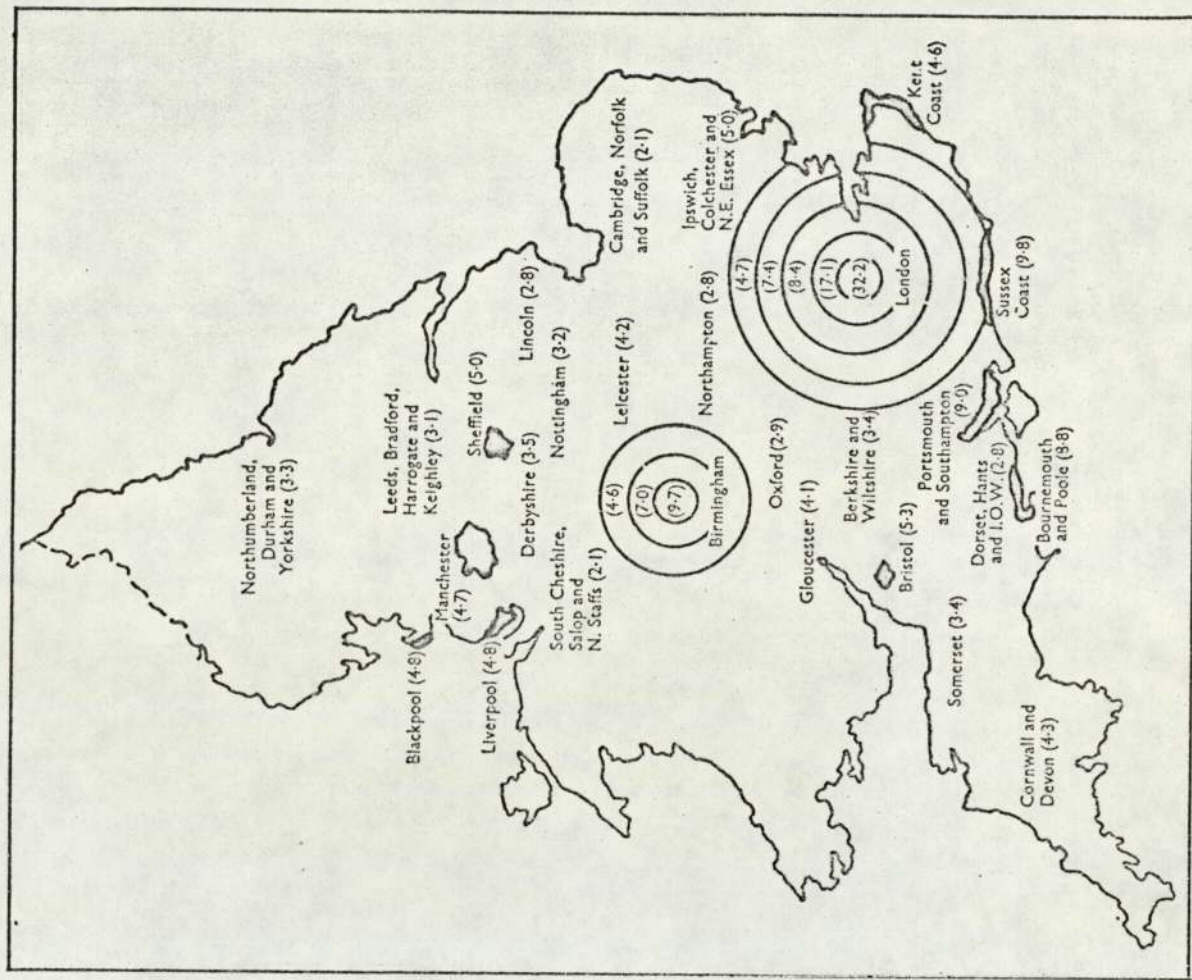


Figure 5.3 England: Prices of residential land per acre, 1960-1964

Source: Stone (1970a)

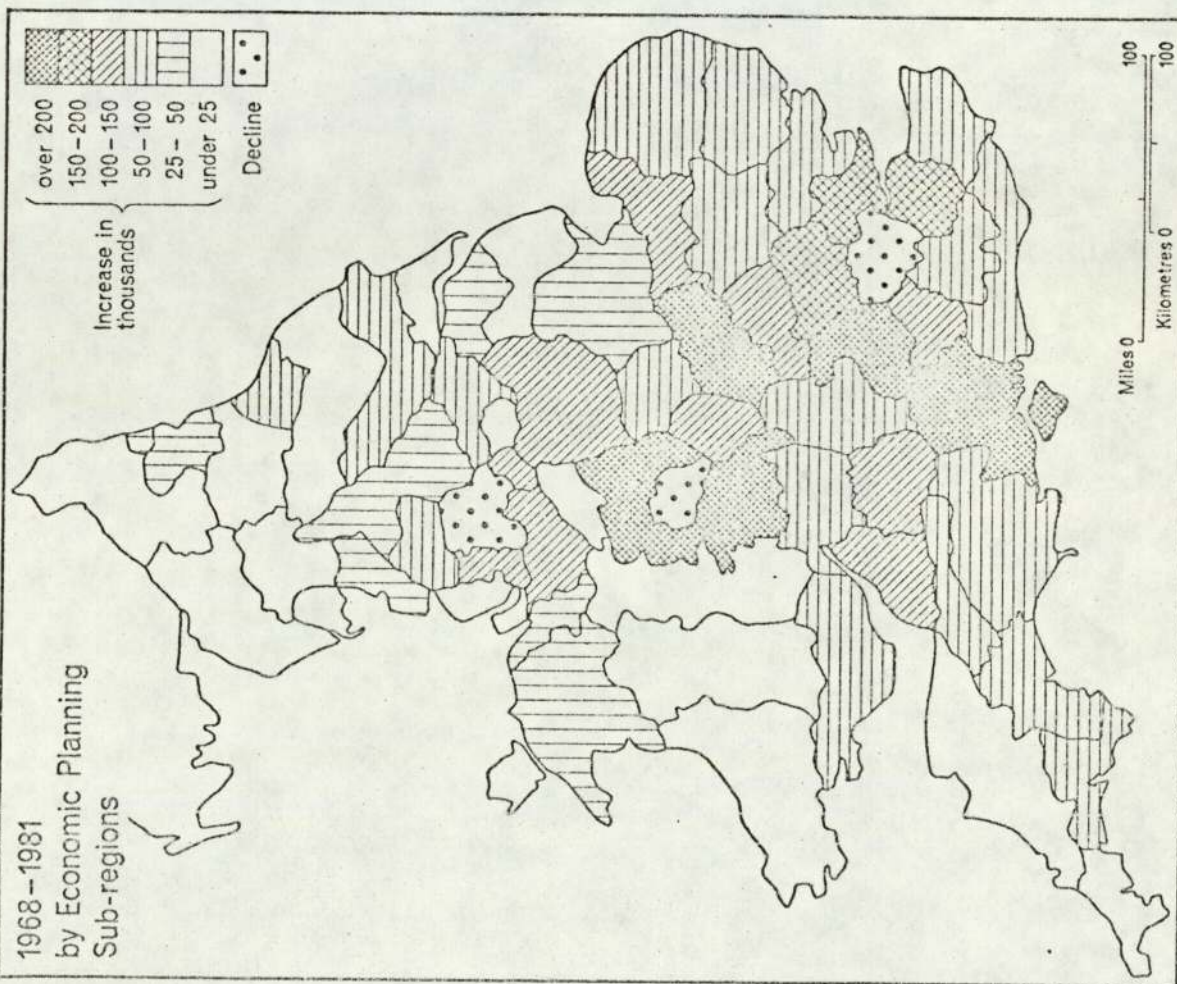


Figure 5.2 England and Wales: Population projection, 1968-1981, by economic planning sub-regions

Source: Hall (1973,2)



Both form and location of new settlement constitute important issues. For example, low densities popularly equate with value for money in terms of 'better' environment and 'good' standards of living, while low rise development has marked economies: but together these make big demands on land resources. Settlement size and shape affect resources needed for construction and operation.<sup>1</sup> Broad locational alternatives appear to be either further consolidation of the megalopolitan axis, or a more dispersed settlement pattern. Mobility of energy resources, services and communication media might offer great scope for the latter, but against this are the desire to consolidate the rural areas for agriculture/recreation and the cost of linking dispersed elements. Furthermore, industrialisation has created an inertia which it is difficult to overcome, including linkages, interdependence of processes, provision of services and the economies of agglomeration.

Since inherited investment in settlement distribution, built form and infrastructure represents a powerful constraint on future patterns of urbanisation, leaving "too much to undo before we can give ourselves enough flexibility to create an entirely new pattern" (Jones, 1970, p.65), it therefore becomes "all the more important that decisions in this field should be taken in the light of the best possible predictions about requirements for the future" (Stone, 1970b, p.55). It is precisely such considerations that underline the necessity for town planning to adopt a national scale approach to the maximisation of existing and integration of new development, and to play a more positive role in national resource management.

Town planning appears to have two main potential contributions in these matters by attempting to clarify, reconcile and make proposals with respect to:-

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<sup>1</sup>Doubling a new town from 50,000 to 100,000 not only increased per capita road building costs by 25% but would increase travelling costs throughout the life of the town (Stone, 1970b, pp.50-51).



- (a) the use/development of the physical environment as a resource;  
and
- (b) the use and allocation of resources in developing and influencing  
the physical environment.

This poses problems of estimating demand in relation to resource potential and of developing satisfactory techniques as a basis for action (Wilson, 1970; Hermansen, 1970). It will involve decisions concerning:-

- (a) the allocation, creation and distribution of 'mobile', or new, resources (e.g. finance, new infrastructure, population); and
- (b) the use, development and mobilisation of 'static', or existing, resources (e.g. land, existing infrastructure, social capital).

The Ministry (M.L.G.P., 1951, pp.81-98) identified the major planning problems of national importance as conflicting claims on land, agriculture, housing, industry, development by Government departments, and public services and utilities: it thought that "to balance, and where possible to reconcile, these vital demands ... is the planner's most important and most difficult responsibility" (p.81). P.E.P. (1951a) defined similar areas of concern<sup>1</sup>, asking "Are such matters now considered by the Government?" and concluding that "whatever the scope and the seat of such discussions, and the reasons for the decisions ... the general public has very little knowledge of them" (p.11). Nevertheless, "only when the whole range of needs and resources is reviewed, and national purposes are clearly defined can the territorial distribution ... be decided, and priorities of development for different areas and different kinds of land use be laid down. Without a national policy, the continuous conflict between what we should like to happen and what seems to be forced upon us cannot be resolved [creating] a precarious combination of expediency and utopia" (p.12).

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<sup>1</sup>Notably integration of land use, industry, roads and population: decentralisation/dispersal; resource priorities for development areas/new towns; and co-ordination, distribution and scale of investment.



As a specific example of the desirability of a more coherent national approach we may cite British new towns policy which, as seen by Rodwin (1956), is fraught with the difficulties of reconciling a physical situation having nationwide implications for Government policies emanating from different departments and pursuing conflicting social and economic objectives. New towns result from the Government's decision to implement planned decentralisation but they do not derive from any plan complementary to this policy. Rodwin considered that "development corporations ought to be closely associated with the strategic ministries and other government agencies whose decisions directly and vitally affect physical development", and remarked the lack of any "central planning agency with power to require the various national agencies to adapt their policies and programs to a national planning and development policy" (p.58). He further considered it unfortunate that "there were no comprehensive long-term national physical development plans [nor] any long-term capital expenditure plan geared to national and regional physical development policies" (p.63). Consequently, speculation arises about the extent to which chance and expediency may have determined the new town allocations; about the compatibility of new towns' policies and programmes with other commitments; and about the number, location and phasing of new towns. Rodwin therefore sees the need for a more coherent planning approach by central government in respect of such matters "if orderly regional and national development is to be encouraged" (p.63).

A similar theme was expressed by Max Lock (1960, p.264) who, twenty years after Barlow, was asking "Where are the new houses to go?". He suggested that "there seems to be no localised solution to this universal problem in the absence of a clear overall view, first of population trends and movements and secondly of a desirable land use structure for the country as a whole". And he questioned "Can this be done in the absence of a regional system co-ordinating economic, social and physical planning needs, and can it be done until we have a Ministry of Planning fully empowered to



co-ordinate plans, needs and policies of other Government Departments which too often act in isolation?" The views of Barlow and the White Paper on 'Employment Policy' (Minister of Reconstruction, 1944) that, although a distribution of industry policy would have to be a multi-departmental enterprise, a single channel for the expression of government policy was needed, were being echoed in a plea for a more unitary national approach to town planning.

Looking at such matters in the broad perspective of 'The New Industrial State', J. K. Galbraith (1972) points out that many accomplishments of the industrial system are due to careful planning of output, price control, production organisation (labour, components, machinery), consumer relations and phasing - "not to a mindless response to a free market but to the subordination of the market at all points to comprehensive planning" (p.360). Applying this notion to the physical environment, we would seek "to minimise or neutralise the adverse market influences [and] to develop a planning authority of adequate power. Only strong comprehensive planning will redeem and make livable the modern city and its surroundings" (p.362). Galbraith concludes that "no natural superiority can be assumed either for the market or for planning. In some places market responses still serve [but] to rely on the market where planning is, in fact, required is to invite serious trouble" (pp.363-364). For example, the production and distribution of goods and services (e.g. housing, transportation) in terms of the standard of physical environment necessary for the national well-being will require, to a greater or lesser extent, the kind of organisational framework which only unified ownership and large corporations (including nationalised industries) can offer. Therefore it seems important that the Government should devote some energy to macro physical planning in the interests of a properly co-ordinated national physical structure and of the most effective use of expenditure and investment, both public and private, to this end.



From a political angle in the mid 1960s, the then Minister, R. H. S. Crossman (1965), foresaw the need for a more comprehensive and positive attitude by central government. "There is no reason to believe 150-odd planning authorities ... each with its plan, will somehow miraculously compose their different plans into a sub-regional plan, or a regional plan or a national plan, which makes any sense whatsoever": he saw the need for "a strong lead from the central government which must provide technical and financial support for organising this planning" (pp.208-209). This view was upheld by Ling<sup>1</sup> with "a very simple philosophy about planning - that it should be carried out at all levels, and that government should have imposed upon it the same obligations as it imposed upon the local planning authorities; i.e. to prepare development plans [which, inter alia] should determine the distribution of industry and population ... in relation to the country as a whole ...". Ling is emphatic that physical plans are necessary at national and regional levels: "if only a quantitative approach is made to economic planning and there is no quality in the environment resulting from it, the effort will hardly be worth while". It is true that some criticisms of the narrow land use/local orientation of British town planning have been met by the 'new' development planning system and extended activity in regional and corporate planning, but there remains great scope for future commitment at the macro scale.

Land and physical fabric are not only scarce and costly commodities, but their disposition will substantially affect the quality of life enjoyed by different socio-economic groupings and by different parts of the country. Thus, allocation of resources for development between sectors, and their global distribution among regions, needs centralised planning and control. A national balance should be secured between resources for development and for conservation so that, say, access for conurban dwellers to remote rural areas may be facilitated, but not the detriment of local inhabitants or the amenity

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<sup>1</sup>In discussion on Crossman (1965, p.209).



which the urban population seeks: likewise the social advantages of city regional concentration should be provided without disadvantaging, through over-development and congestion, those who live in or are serviced by the cities.

The social, economic, environmental and resource implications of major physical projects of national significance, like the Channel Tunnel or Maplin, also demand a more coherent and unitary central approach: indeed, the whole question of airport planning illustrates the need for positive national overview. The procedure of considering a third airport for London through an ad hoc commission with limited terms of reference, and a decision process heavily influenced by particularised and localised pressure groups, has many unsatisfactory aspects. It might have been more realistically handled by, for example, a national planning agency with research, policy-/plan-making and co-ordination functions, working closely with government departments, regional economic planning councils and other relevant organisations, and examining the need for, and implications of, an additional international airport for Britain (as opposed to a third London airport) having regard to the interests of the country as a whole.<sup>1</sup>

Public policy dimensions of airport planning are of prime importance for Britain, not only in domestic terms but also with respect to her role in international air transport (Sealy, 1966). R. S. Doganis (1967, p.247) expressed surprise at there being "no clearly defined national policy on the development of new airports and no national policy on the further expansion of air services": only a comprehensive approach can adequately tackle such issues as the large amounts of land and capital involved, assimilation of technological advances, development of an airport hierarchy related to the population and industry to be served, integration of airports into a national transport framework, and difficulties in providing infrastructure on the

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<sup>1</sup>For Anthony Crosland, Maplin "makes no sense at all" in either national airport, environmental or regional terms (B.B.C. Radio, June 1973).



basis of the uncertain nature of air services (Figure 5.4). The nexus between airport planning and macro town planning may be made by reference to the work of the Roskill Commission (1971) on the Third London Airport. This debate is well-documented and no amplification is required here, except to stress the enormous impact which the project would have locally, regionally and nationally. We therefore emphasise the wider perspective of Sir Colin Buchanan's Note of Dissent which suggested that, in the interests of the community, the airport should be seen as an instrument of planning and social policy, both environmentally and in "promoting equality of wealth and opportunity with particular regard to regional planning objectives" (para.45).

Quite apart from the environmental aspects of the airport itself, potential urbanisation effects in terms of population, employment and traffic (Cripps and Foot, 1970), including the need for new towns/cities and communications systems, are extensive. Although this appears largely as a regional scale problem, it has detailed/local and strategic/national repercussions which need to be considered at each spatial level, and not least from the nationwide standpoint of those regions that will not benefit/suffer from its impact as well as of those that will. Thus, integrated planning procedure embracing all three primary scales is required: at macro level, context for airport planning would be wanted in the form of, say, a national airport strategy (for example, Figure 5.5), and this, in turn, would need to take its place in some kind of wider, comprehensive national policy instrument.

Such considerations point to the need for an indicative national physical plan, or strategy, along the lines suggested by Wilfred Burns (1971)<sup>1</sup> who noted the unreality of there being "no hierarchical arrangement as between regional strategic plans and national framework policies", despite their interdependence and the continuous nature of the planning operation (p.308). In the same way that economic and social inputs to regional planning have

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<sup>1</sup> A paper of major significance on macro planning approach in Britain.



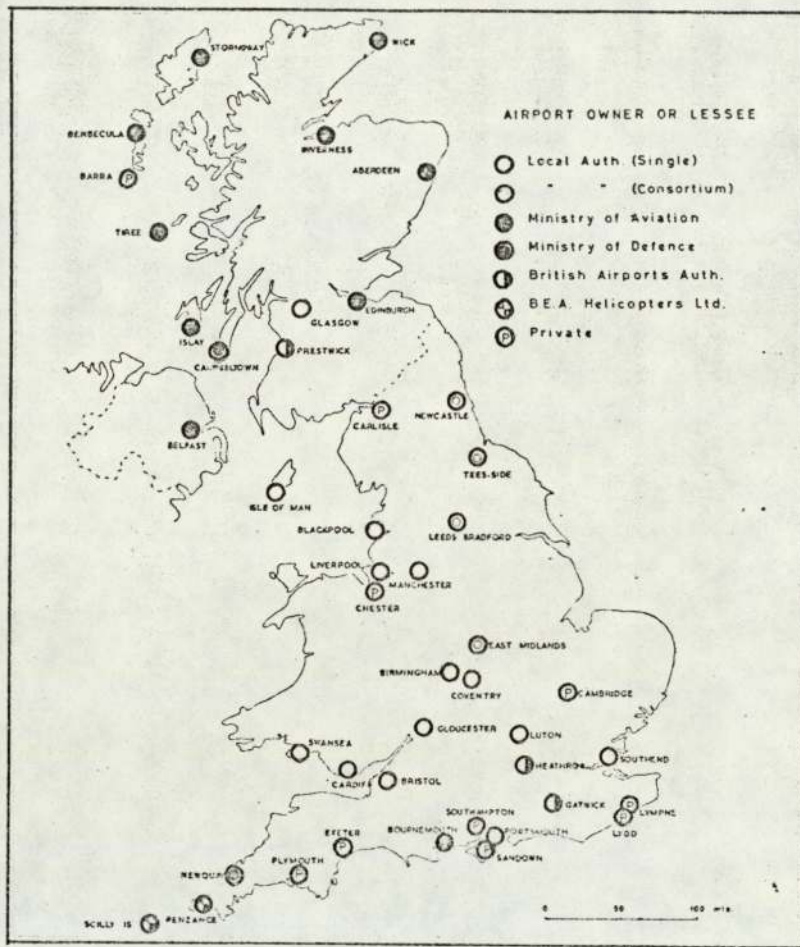


Figure 5.4 United Kingdom: Ownership of scheduled service airports, 1966

Source: Doganis (1967)

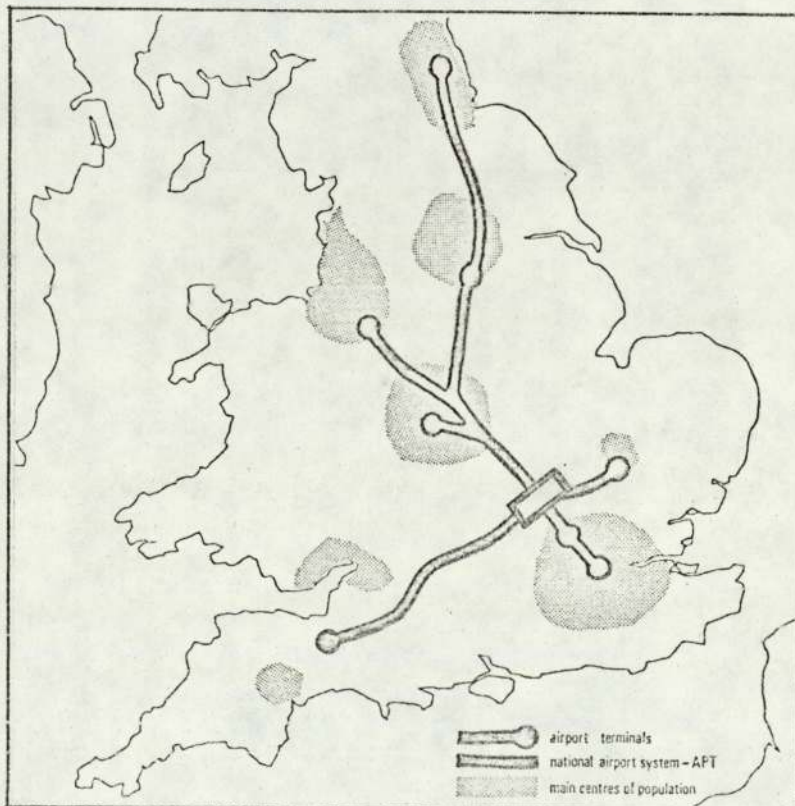


Figure 5.5 England and Wales: A national airport system based on Cublington

Source: Waters (1971)



physical implications<sup>1</sup> on the basis of which regional plans should enable structure plans to be prepared,<sup>2</sup> so regional plans themselves need to be seen in wider context "against a common background of national policies. We have ... national policies covering many specific fields [~~but~~] what planners are interested in, however, is the interrelationships between these various national policies in so far as they affect the use of land in this country. A comprehensive land use policy framework would, of course, be concerned with the distribution of settlements and city regions and with rural resource policies. It would have links with many other national policy issues and plans, but its real value would be in setting the physical framework, having regard to social and economic objectives and the need to use our land resources as carefully as possible.<sup>3</sup> Let me call this the national strategic framework. Such a framework must show how, looked at nationally, we are likely to gain most advantage or least disadvantage, from different population and employment distributions, having regard to such factors as our national communications systems, the quality of our land and landscape and the availability of major services" (p.311).

A cogent view on "the necessity or otherwise for national land use planning, or in other words physical planning on a national level" is also given by Lean (1967, p.230): "... every activity whether organised nationally, regionally or locally, or carried out by individuals or companies, must take place somewhere and therefore have a locational aspect [~~and~~] repercussions on

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<sup>1</sup>These include "(1) the opportunities offered by the land for maximising on particular uses such as agricultural production, recreation provision, forestry or the exploitation of natural resources; (2) the relationship between town and country, both at the scale of the city region and at the 'day-out' recreation scale; and (3) the changing accessibility patterns between different land uses and activities and the physical as well as non-physical linkages that facilitate these changes"(p.309).

<sup>2</sup>Structure would be formulated "(1) around a realistic population figure; (2) with a role that is clearly seen in relation to other areas; and (3) against a general background of availability of resources, constraints and opportunities that only a regional plan can indicate"(p.310).

<sup>3</sup>Cf. the meaning of structure ascribed in the Development Plans Manual (M.H.L.G., 1970, para.3.6).



other land uses". Lean observes that "the absence of physical planning ... to discern what will be the resultant pattern of land uses ... may lead to a less efficient use being made of resources than when there is physical planning", and he notes that "many location decisions are taken on a national level or subject to confirmation by central government departments; among them, the siting of new towns and town expansions, the building of motorways, alterations to the railway system, development of ports and harbours, and the building of power stations". All decisions on such matters need bringing together "in order to try to reconcile ... co-ordinate and guide them to achieve maximum economic growth". National physical planning is thus "a necessary complement to national economic planning [and] a prerequisite to any form of regional planning. The pattern of land uses that emerges in a region as a result of regional planning might have repercussions on other regions, and ... these effects may not be seen unless there is a body studying ... regional planning decisions on a national level ... to bring out interregional relationships. Many land uses ... that cross regional boundaries ... cannot be adequately planned on a regional level. There may also be a conflict of interests between the regions [and] national land use planning is the best method of dealing with these problems".

But a national framework, says Burns (1971), "cannot be built up by aggregating regional plans any more than regional plans can be built up by aggregating structure plans. On the other hand [it] cannot be drawn up without a considerable amount of work having already been done at regional level... . Given the need for this interrelationship between regional and national frameworks, we still have to ask ... how far we can go and in what analytical direction" (p.311). Burns' conclusion is crucial to our hypothesis. "We need to understand ... that this is an immensely complicated field, [and] some have argued that one cannot even start on the job". Nevertheless, "an inadequate effort in this direction is better than none [if] we are realistic about what can be achieved". We lack any "model - or, for that matter, conceptual framework - for analysing problems at this scale, and we, therefore,



enter unexplored territory. But we had to learn our way through the regional planning process in the South East and [hopefully] can do the same in the ... country as a whole" (p.312).<sup>1</sup>

There emerges, then, a distinct and particular need, backed by responsible pragmatic argument - though so far with little official support - for physical planning at the national level in Britain: and, if the need for this process is accepted, it carries the clear implication that some kind of policy instrument would also be required. We suggest an indicative national physical plan. But what kind of plan would this be? What, for example, conceptual basis would it have? - how would it relate to its operational context and what techniques might support it? - with what substantive issues would it deal? - what precedents might it follow? - what form would it take? These are the questions to which Part II of the study is devoted, but, by way of introduction, we outline briefly some characteristics of the plan we anticipate.

The immediate *raison d'être* of an indicative national physical plan would be the mandate of the 1943 Act. It would, therefore, deal essentially with the use and development of land, and its main concern would be the articulation of a coherent national policy in respect of this. It would, in effect, represent a comprehensive land use policy/framework/strategy indicating the general principles and broad design concepts in accordance with which the physical structure of the country could develop to best national advantage in the light of wider socio-economic goals/objectives and the efficient use of land and financial resources. It will thus be closely involved with economic planning since the physical fabric is both a large consumer of finance and an important facilitator of the economic system; it will be concerned with resource planning (finance, water, energy, manpower); and it will be implicated in the whole process of the corporate management

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<sup>1</sup>If this was a hint of developments in Government, nothing yet appears to have come of it.



of the country in relation to which it will co-ordinate those aspects of all national policies which significantly affect macro land use and physical structure.

An indicative national physical plan would not be a document aimed at a blueprinted end state, but rather it would give an idea of possible developments and a desirable structure for accommodating these. Its role as a town planning policy instrument may be summarised with reference to an analysis by S. R. Miles (1970) of the allocation of responsibilities, and change in these, for key elements in the comprehensive planning process. Thus we see indicative national physical planning as part of an integrated decision model, embodying components of space and time, in which the national level is characterised notably by central government plan formulation, supervision and implementation functions within a primarily long-term or strategic perspective (Figure 5.6). We see too that the national level may be expected to extend both its plan-making role into shorter time-scale and its co-ordination function over regional and local levels (Figure 5.7). Consideration and evaluation of alternative national futures in accordance with its goals/objectives, and the process of regionalisation, would be particularly important aspects of the plan.

As to the content of the plan, it should reflect the requirements of the population in respect of living, employment and recreation facilities; of social and utility services; of interactions and linkages; and of proper standards of efficiency and amenity. The plan would, in systems parlance, be expected to give a broad brush picture of the major elements of national structure with regard to the spaces and channels necessary for the accommodation of national activities and communications. Thus its principal physical/environmental components might fall into three categories: settlements (including distribution and character in terms of location, size, function, growth and form of urban areas); countryside (including agricultural, recreational and amenity areas); and communications (including roads, railways, waterways and airports).



| Time \ Space | current<br>(one to two<br>year plans) | medium<br>(five to ten<br>year plans) | perspective<br>(fifteen to fifty<br>year plans) |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| local        | R F S<br><u>L F S I</u>               |                                       |   |
| regional     |                                       | C F S<br><u>R F S I</u><br>L F I      |   |
| national     |                                       |                                       | <u>C F S I</u><br>R F S I<br>L I                |

Key: L local government                      F plan formulation  
R regional government                    S supervision  
C central government                      I implementation

                     unquestionable allocation of responsibility

Figure 5.6 Allocation of responsibility for elements of the comprehensive planning process

Source: Miles (1970)

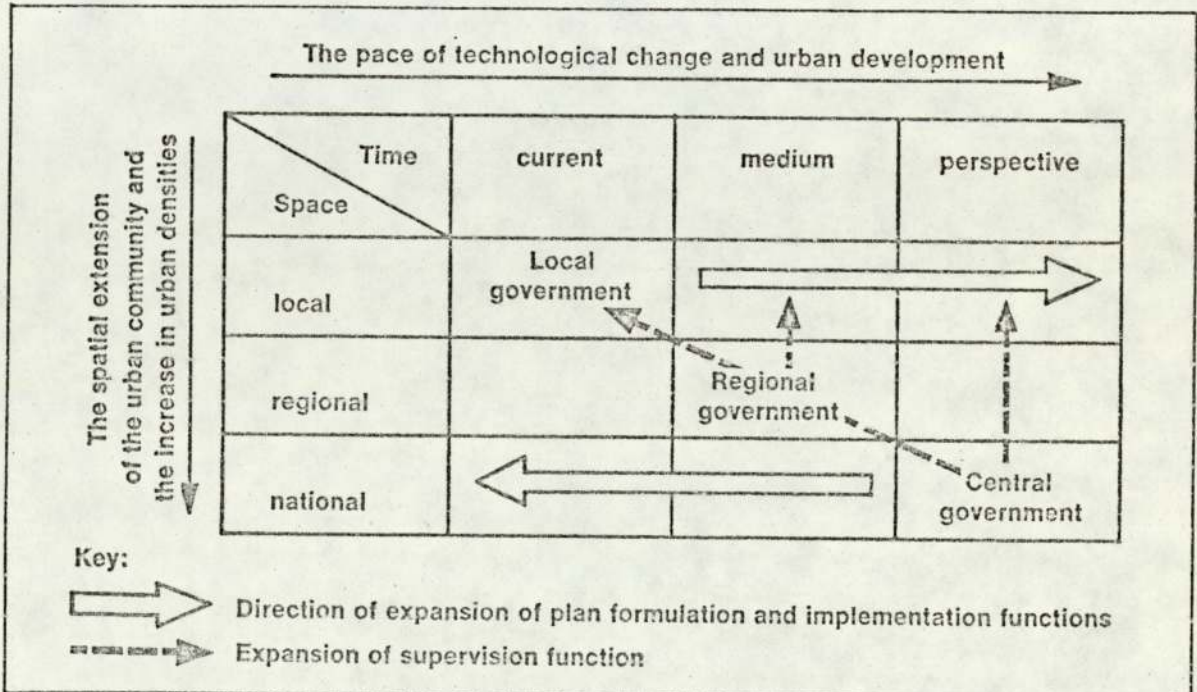


Figure 5.7 Changing allocation of planning responsibilities as influenced by the forces of space and time

Source: Miles (1970)



In the succeeding chapters we examine this concept further for validity and potential practical application. That there is a gap in the British town planning system in respect of this kind of comprehensive approach to policy-/plan-making at macro scale is hardly in dispute. But, while it appears that it would be both useful and feasible to develop a policy instrument at national level which would redress this omission and integrate satisfactorily with the existing institutional framework from a technical standpoint, there remains the political issue. In this study we must largely beg the question, except to emphasise that firm political support would be needed for an indicative national physical plan to gain acceptance and, even more so, to enable it to work.



SOME CONCEPTUAL APPROACHES

The need for an indicative national physical plan has been hypothesised in response to the absence of a comprehensive plan-making approach at national scale in Britain. In this chapter, we seek theoretical support for such an explicitly articulated national strategic framework in terms of legitimacy, rationale and direction through an examination of five conceptual models.<sup>1</sup> National physical planning is therefore considered with reference to a substantive place-work-folk background (Glikson, 1955); to spatial structure (Foley, 1964); to the ecological/systems approach (McLoughlin, 1965b, 1967, 1969); centre/periphery relationships (Schon, 1970); and to resource objectives (Wilson, 1973). These examples lend understanding, respectively, to the social/economic/physical basis of national existence; to the physical dimension of national structure; to the systemic interdependence of all spatial scales; to centre-periphery interactions in policy-/plan-making; and to the importance of the 'town planning objective' in national resource considerations.

The Le Play model

Our hypothesis emphasises procedural aspects which, however, only have utility in so far as they influence substantive man/environment relationships: their social/economic/physical focus can be well expressed in an adaptation of Frederic Le Play's place-work-folk formula and Geddes ecological approach where Artur Glikson (1955) developed the idea of 'planning for habitability'.<sup>2</sup> In the main relationships (Figure 6.1A) 'folk' affect, and are affected by, physical factors and by economic opportunities; 'place' conditions, and is conditioned by, social activities and economic opportunities; and 'work'

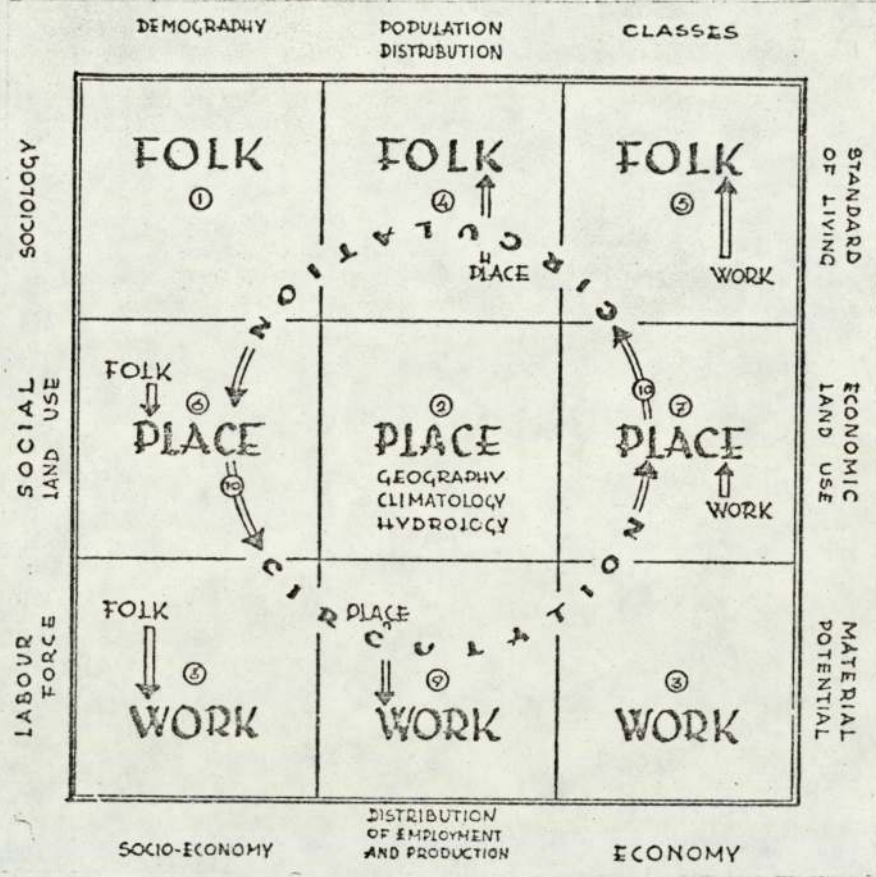
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<sup>1</sup>Not for their exclusive relevance but because they appear to present a "set of concepts and a pattern of relations among these concepts that might contribute towards future theoretical approaches" (Foley, 1964, p.41). British town planning is poorly endowed with conceptual theory, and we owe much to American influences in this field.

<sup>2</sup>Town planning owes much to the inspiration drawn by Geddes and others from Le Play's work. Cf. Schuster Committee (1950, paras.11-12).



A. The main relationships



B. The planning application

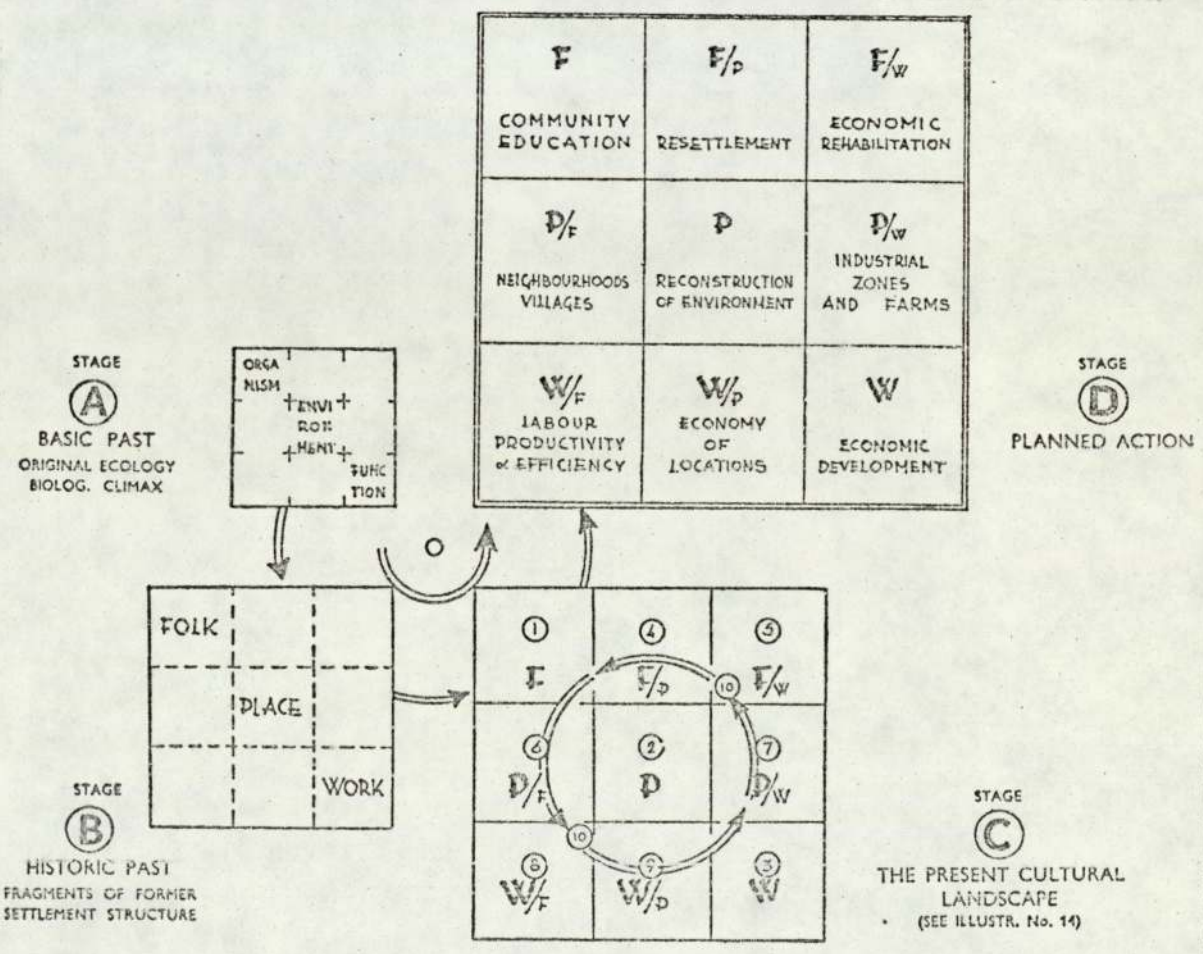


Figure 6.1 The Le Play model: An ecological approach to physical planning

Source: Glikson (1955)



induces, and is induced by, social activities and physical factors. Glikson's planning model incorporates circulation; also time, so that understanding of past and present leads to planned future action (Figure 6.1B). But with, inter alia, increased affluence/leisure and the dependence of modern technological society on energy resources, a greater breadth of interpretation is required. Therefore, in our own town planning variation of the model (Figure 6.2), we make specific reference to these powerful influences of our time as complementary to population and employment respectively, while transportation is treated as integral with land use.

The contribution of the Le Play model lies not in any innovation, but rather in its time-honoured relevance to town planning and in its simplicity, which allows infinitely complex relationships to be reduced to conceptually manageable dimensions: it thus offers a framework for the consideration of key social, economic and physical variables which, with emphasis on physical aspects, form the substantive focus of modern British town planning.

#### The Foley model

The model which Foley (1964) used to explain 'metropolitan spatial structure' as a facet of broader 'metropolitan structure' is here applied to town planning at national scale. Foley proposes a conceptual framework (Table 6.1) that seeks to relate aspatial and spatial aspects<sup>1</sup> of community organisation with values and with the physical environment. The principal relationship (Figure 6.3) between 1A and 3B via 2A and 2B, illustrates how "normative aspects of community structure" find expression in the "space-consuming and space-defining" physical environment with functional organisation "mediating ... between the norms and values ... and physical environmental planning" (p.27).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>'Spatial' implies a direct concern for spatial pattern at the scale under consideration; 'aspatial' implies no such direct concern.

<sup>2</sup>Chadwick (1971, p.98) notes ambiguities in the framework: Foley (p.53) admits that it "will by no means do all things for all purposes".



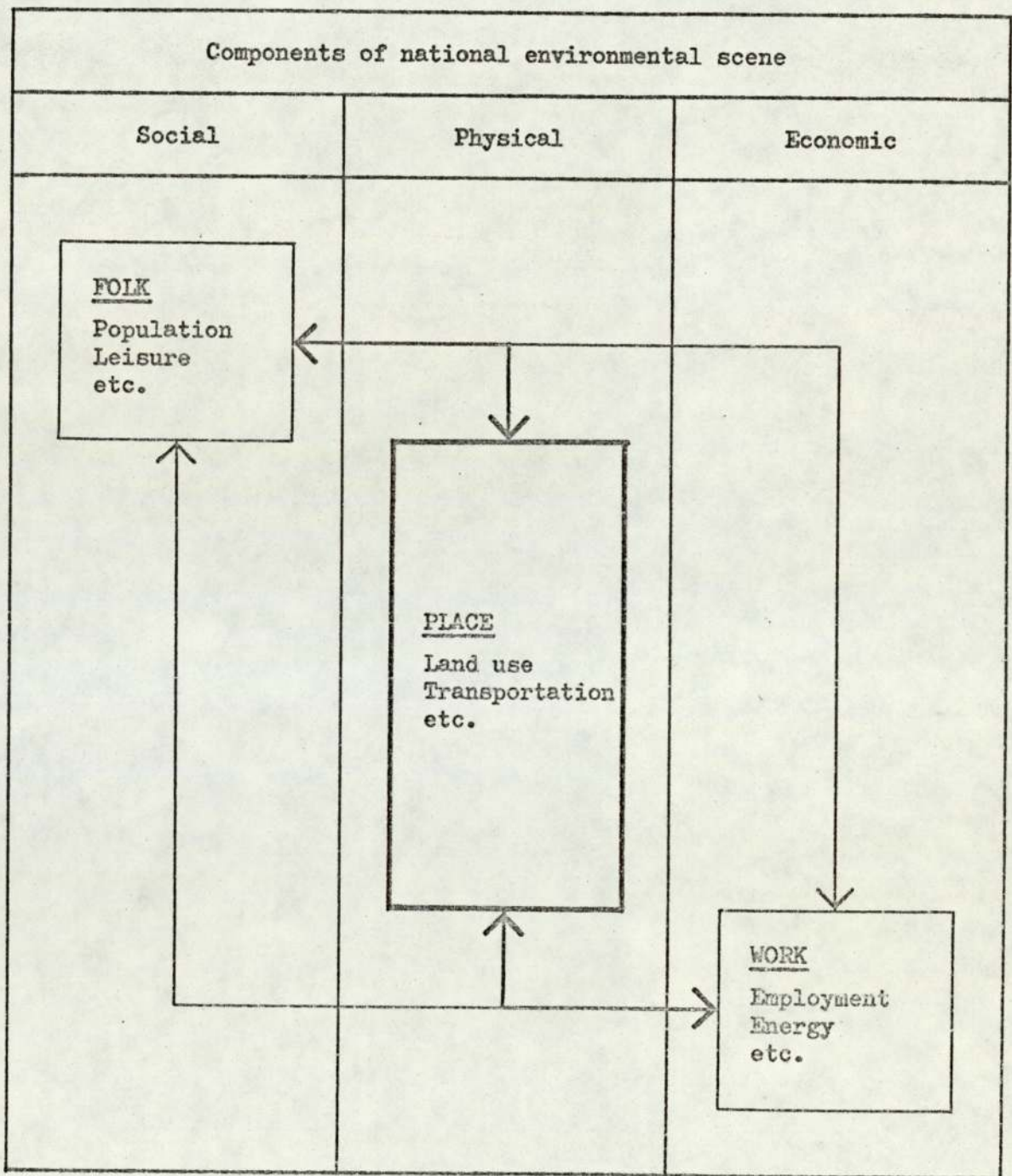


Figure 6.2 A substantive focus for national physical planning:  
The Le Play model  
Source: original, based on Glikson (1955)



Table 6.1 Aspects of national structure: A conceptual view of components and interrelationships

Source: Foley (1964)

|                                      | A. Aspatial Aspects   | B. Spatial Aspects  |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| 1. Normative or Cultural Aspects     | 1A<br>Social values; culture patterns; norms; institutional setting; technology   | 1B<br>Spatial distribution of culture patterns and norms; values and norms directly concerned with the qualities and determination of the spatial patterns of activities, population, and the physical environment      |
| 2. Functional Organisational Aspects | 2A<br>Division and allocation of functions; functional interdependence; activity systems and sub-systems, including persons and establishments in their functional-role sense | 2B<br>Spatial distribution of functions and activities; linkages (functional relations spatially conceived); spatial pattern of establishments, by functional type  |
| 3. Physical Aspects                  | 3A<br>Physical objects: the geophysical environment, man-developed material improvements, people as physical bodies; qualities of these objects                               | 3B<br>Spatial distribution of physical objects; the resulting spatial pattern formed by this distribution of land forms, buildings, roads, people, etc.; distribution in space of varying qualities of physical objects |

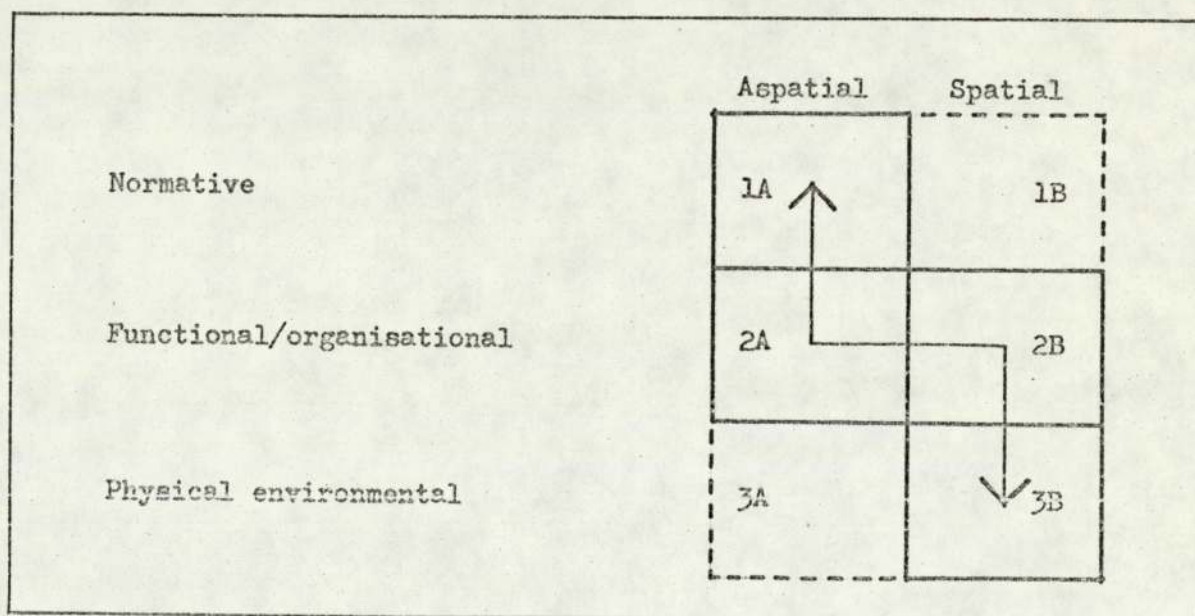


Figure 6.3 Aspects of national structure: The main relationship

Source: Foley (1964)



Interplay between 1A and 2A leads to spatial considerations (2B) including the impact "of alternative spatial arrangements [on the] facilitating or restricting of activities ...". Although interaction of spatial functional organisation (2B) and the physical environment (3B) implies "activities being snugly accommodated by the physical facilities", it is important to distinguish between activities spatially organised and physical spaces and channels. "Physical facilities once developed tend to be either fixed or expensive to alter. The volume, kinds, and distribution of activities, however, may shift considerably [and] may adapt to their facilities; they may be seriously restricted by their facilities; or they may be forced to move from old facilities to newly developed ones" (pp.29-32).

The 2B - 3B relationship is crucial because "the physical environmental pattern ... would seem to constitute a forceful determinant, having impacts or providing restraints on the spatial patterning of activities and ... on the functional organisation of the community" (p.32); activities which the physical environment has to accommodate provide "a more palpable set of requirements for which to plan than do values, as they are usually presented" (p.42). An approach is proposed "that would centre on the social, political and economic organisation of the [nation] as a functioning system complete with various sub-systems ... guiding the character and spatial patterning of the organisation [through] a development policy and a spatial plan for the physical base" (pp.71-72). Foley concludes that "we are in urgent need of methods for describing and analysing how the [nation] functions as a system, and how smaller systems fit into the over-all system [because] only then can the task of recommending an appropriate physical environment as a base be meaningfully tackled" (pp.74-75).

The significant focus of Foley's construct for town planning is "spatial flows of information, money, people, and goods; locations of the physical channels and of the adapted spaces that physically house activities; and locations of activity places" (Webber, 1964a, p.96). His framework sets



town planning's physical role in wider context and, in so doing, confirms and emphasises its unique contribution - that the physical aspect is an integral element of socio-environmental structure which may be related to any spatial scale. Thus, applied at national scale, the construct bespeaks validity for indicative national physical planning, offering a basis for understanding and action on physical issues of national significance within the broader setting of national structure.

An attempt is made in Table 6.2 to apply this to the British situation. For example, new/expanded towns may be seen as a particular type of settlement pattern (3B) responding to the locational requirements of population and employment (2B) which arises from the functional needs of activity systems (2A) as organised in the light of nationally held societal values (1A). The spatial component of the model is traced in Figure 6.4 where we identify the distributional features of an institutional response to normative aspects in historical perspective (1B); of an economic activity system response to functional/organisational aspects (2B); and of a new-communities response to physical/environmental aspects (3B). It may thus be said that all aspects of the model contribute to the town planning process as a national function with its unique focus at 3B.

#### The systems model

Foley has referred to the need to recognise systems and the general characteristics of systemic planning are well known (Catanese and Steiss, 1968). So J.B. McLoughlin (1969, p.77),<sup>1</sup> developing the theme of Stafford Beer, stresses that "if we wish to consider the interactions affecting [any] entity, then we shall have to define that entity as part of a system. The system ... is a system because it contains interrelated parts, and is in some sense a complete whole in itself" as well as "part of a number of such systems, each of which is a sub-system of a series of larger systems".

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Chadwick (1966, 1971). But the systems view is not beyond criticism, vide Rose and Millar (1966): the latter prefers "systematic" (p.274).



Table 6.2 Application of the Foley model to Britain  
 Source: original, based on Foley (1964)

|                                      | A. Aspatial aspects  | B. Spatial aspects   |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| 1. Normative aspects                 | 1A<br>Socio-political values<br>Insular maritime tradition<br>Celtic/Saxon ethnic base<br>Indigenous/exogenous influences<br>Free market economy<br>Ethics of town/country<br>Post industrial technology<br>Central/local administration   | 1B<br>National heritage patterning<br>'Island fortress'/European state<br>Highland/lowland cultures<br>Regional, minority consciousness<br>Socio-economic balances<br>Urban/rural relationships<br>Spaces/channels infrastructure<br>Ordering of land uses   |
| 2. Functional organisational aspects | 2A<br>Activities, divisions of functions, interactions, linkages<br>Human behaviour<br>Production/management systems<br>Fuel/power/service systems<br>Leisure/cultural systems<br>Distribution systems<br>External activities linkage  | 2B<br>Locational/movement patterns, hierarchies<br>Population distribution<br>Employment/business location<br>Public utilities distribution<br>Recreation/social facility patterns<br>Communications networks<br>Supra-national relationships  |
| 3. Physical environmental aspects    | 3A<br>Geophysical base: high/low land; geology; climatic conditions; flora/fauna<br>Adapted spaces/channels to house human activities/communications: housing, industrial/service complexes; recreational spaces, rural areas; power, water installations; roads, railways, ports/airports | 3B<br>Distribution of landforms, climates, ecological patterns, resources<br>Settlement patterns, hierarchies/linkages: concentrated/dispersed; circular, star, linear; metropolitan, city, regional, conurban, new/expanded town; national parks, landscape, agricultural areas; public utility services; motorway/inter-city/sea/air routes/freightliner; major transport interchanges |



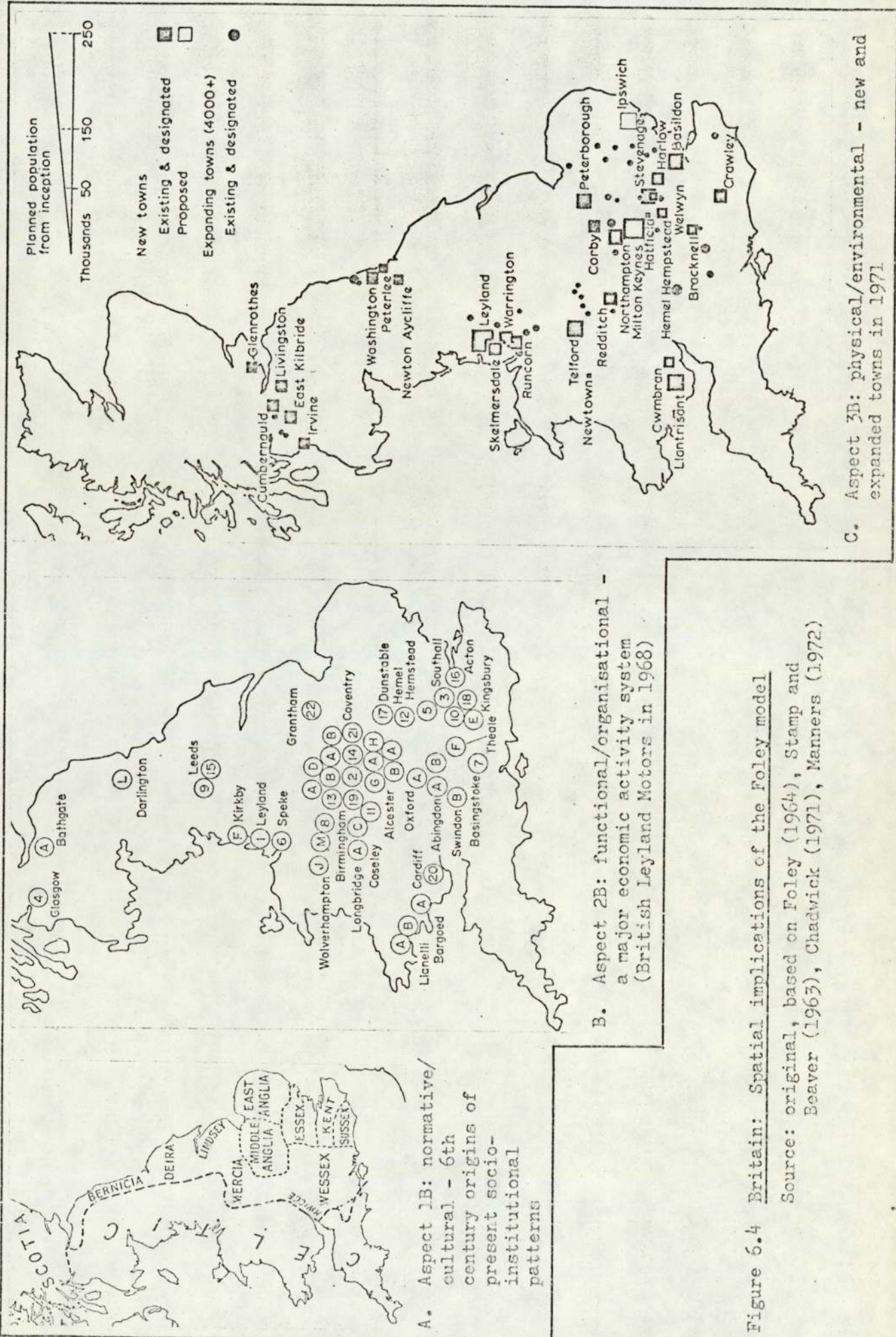


Figure 6.4 Britain: Spatial implications of the Foley model

Source: original, based on Foley (1964), Stamp and Beaver (1963), Chadwick (1971), Manners (1972)



The 'systems approach' involves the identification of parts or components and connections or interactions in a man/environment eco-system which gives rise to a continuum of activities in spaces (e.g. towns, countryside) and communications in channels (e.g. roads, railways): the system therefore takes physical form. "Physical planning is primarily concerned with systemic change ... and its ... regulation in the social interest in ... the physical environment" (McLoughlin, 1965b, pp.397-399): the systems contribution "has been to point to the dynamic nature of the system's continuous evolution and ... the awesome complexity of its workings, bound up as they are with human behaviour and human values" (McLoughlin, 1967, p.43). R. B. Mitchell (1961, p.171) proposed "plans for the nature, rate, quantity and quality of [national] change - for a process of development ... expressed in dynamic rather than in static terms. They will start with present conditions and point the direction of change" forming part of an evolving, action-oriented, iterative process. This approach can usefully link the various parts of the process, enabling a better appreciation of problems, opportunities, and the impact of different proposals by offering "a single framework for the continuing task" (McLoughlin, 1969, p.297).

The systems model underlines both the existence of and interaction between every aspect of the system under consideration. Applying town planning to a country, the national scale comprises a system per se, as well as both containing a set of interconnected sub-systems and forming but one part of a larger system. Figure 6.5 shows how Britain may be viewed as an entity, both embodying sub-systems (regions, activities) and at the same time itself behaving as a sub-system within its wider setting.<sup>1</sup> The concept of a national system evolving through space and time may be illustrated by reference to regional policy and the changing geography of assistance

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Council of Europe (1968): "... the planning of ... the Netherlands ... cannot be dissociated from the geographical situation of that country in Europe [and] the physical development of the Netherlands must be based on a European concept" (p.50); "... national policy ... must accordingly be founded on development in other countries" (p.70).



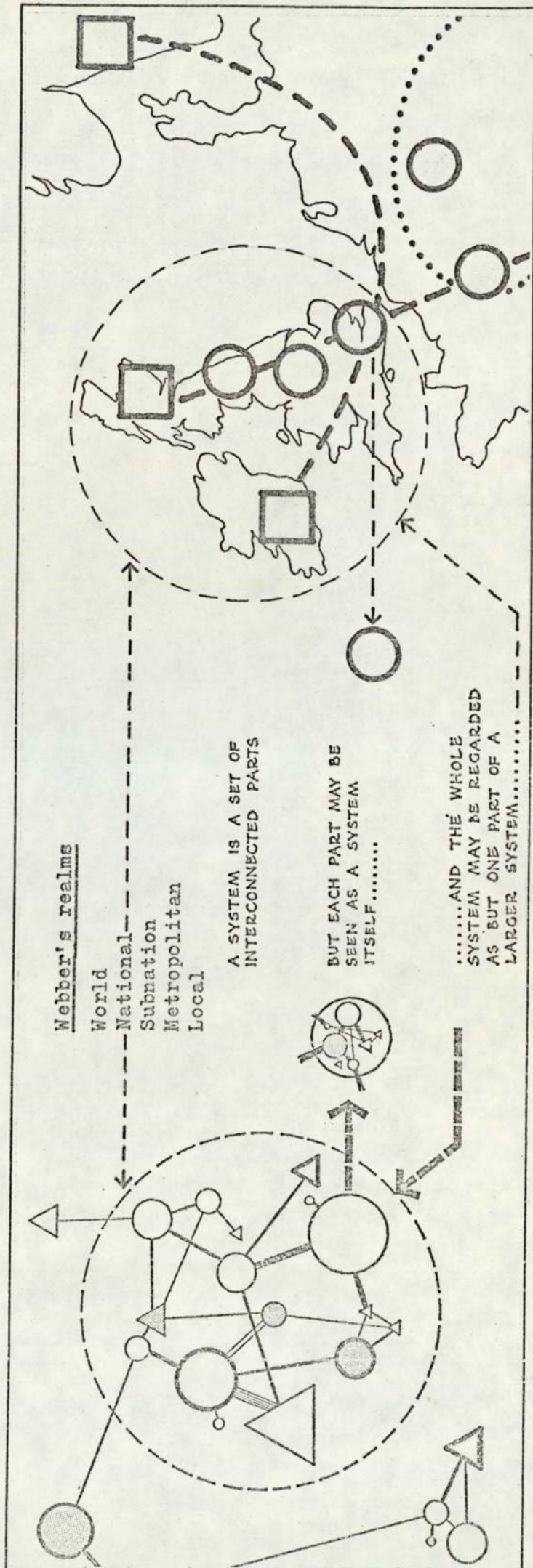


Figure 6.5 Britain: A conceptual view as a system for national physical planning purposes  
 Source: original, based on Webber (1964), Council of Europe (1968), McLoughlin (1969)



(Figure 6.6). The importance of identifying national systemic components and interrelationships as a basis for public policy is shown in Figure 6.7. Here we identify the spatial incidence of problems stemming from two facets (unemployment (A) and depopulation (B)) of two activity sub-systems (work and folk) of the national system: we also identify the spatial patterning of two facets (major road/air (C) and rail facilities (D)) of the communications sub-system. As a result, we see that the concentration of communication systems in the London-Midlands area has confirmed its steadily increasing nodality and relative attractiveness as a location for activity systems in marked contrast to those areas which are short of jobs and losing people (Manners, 1972). These patterns and their correlations are not purely coincidental nor should we allow their future evolution to be so: their planning demands a comprehensive national approach, both internally and supra-nationally.

Town planning at local or regional levels cannot operate in a systemic vacuum.<sup>1</sup> Seeking a proper perspective for the national scale Professor G. F. Chadwick (1971) advocated "the identification and depiction of spatial structures as parts of meaningful systems of relationships, and the level at which this is done is dependent upon the system which is studied" (p.199): we certainly endorse his suggestion that "our needs are greatest at the level, firstly, of national planning, as a counterpart to other kinds of modelling of the national economy" (p.103).

#### The Schon model

Donald Schon (1970) develops the notion of the centre-periphery model for the diffusion of innovation: his thesis has important implications for town planning at national (central) and regional and local (peripheral) scales. The basic model (Figure 6.8) postulates that some novelty to be spread is at

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<sup>1</sup> No town planning system is likely to succeed if it "prevents problems from being considered over the areas necessary for their solution [but rather] it is more likely to meet people's requirements and make the most effective use of resources if its responsibility extends over the whole area ..." (Maud Commission, 1969, para.243).



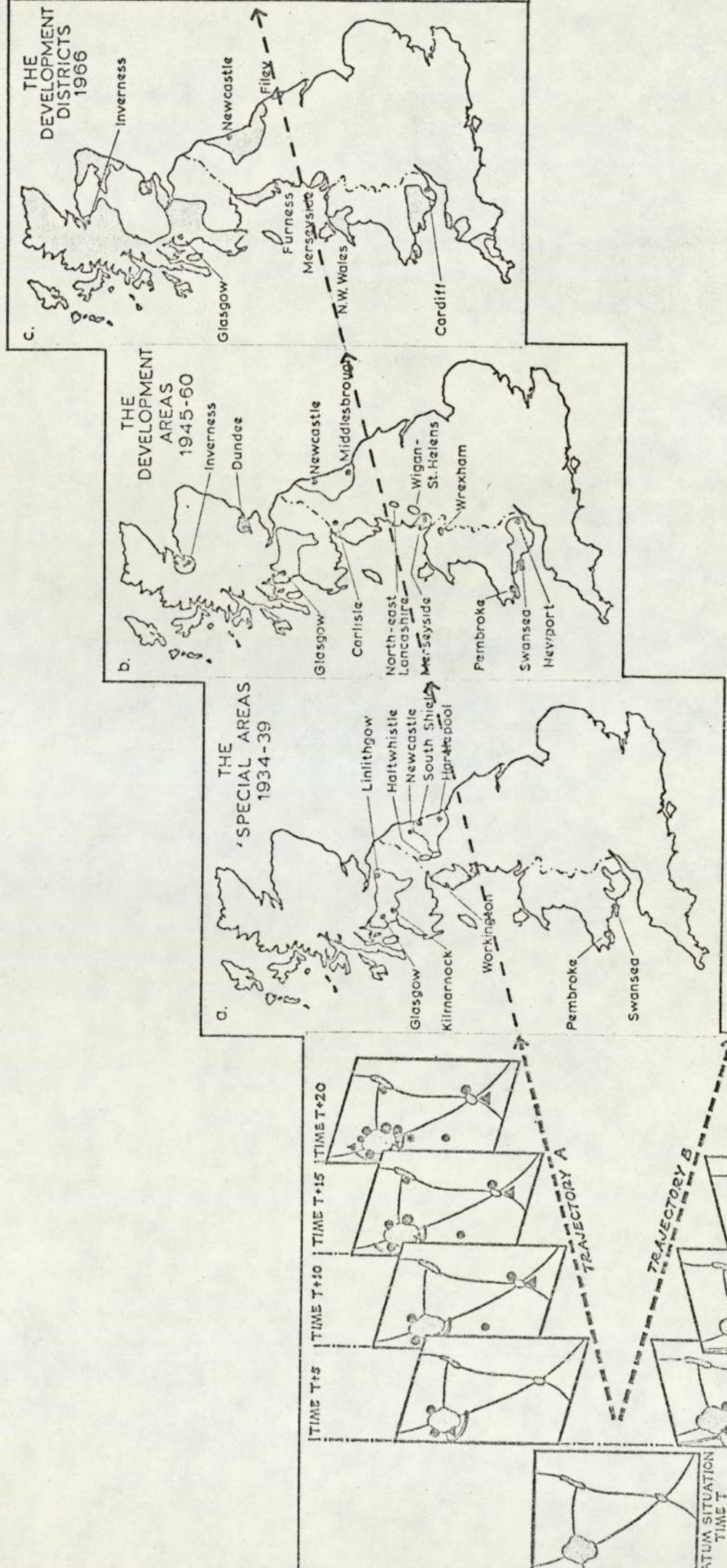
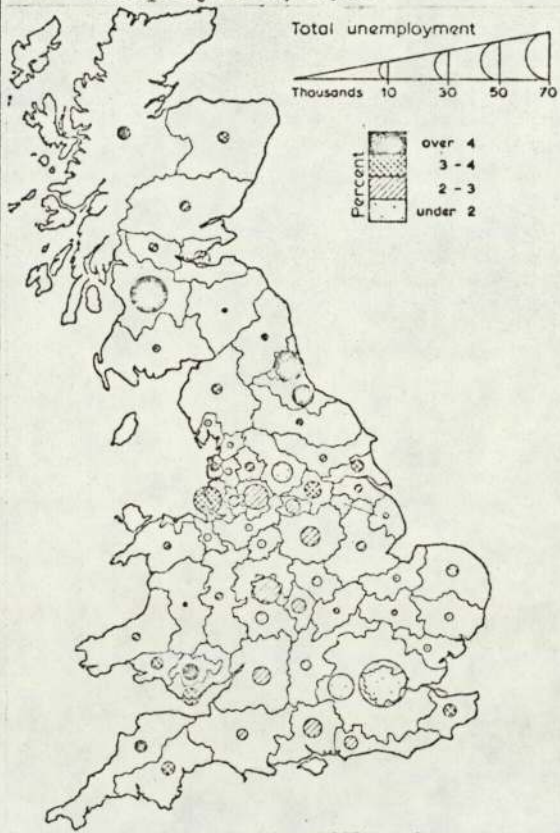


Figure 6.6 Britain: Changing geography of assistance conceptualised as a system trajectory evolving in space and through time

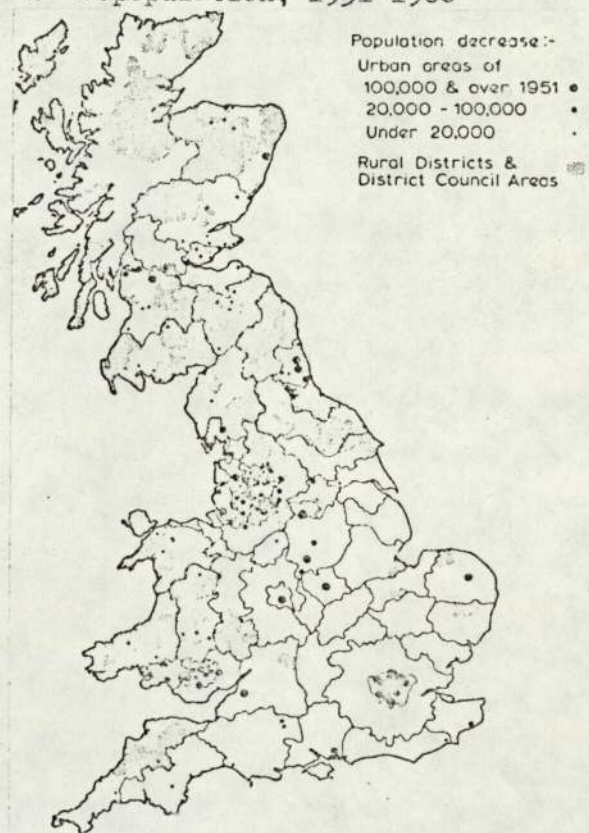
Source: original, based on McLoughlin (1969), Manners (1972)



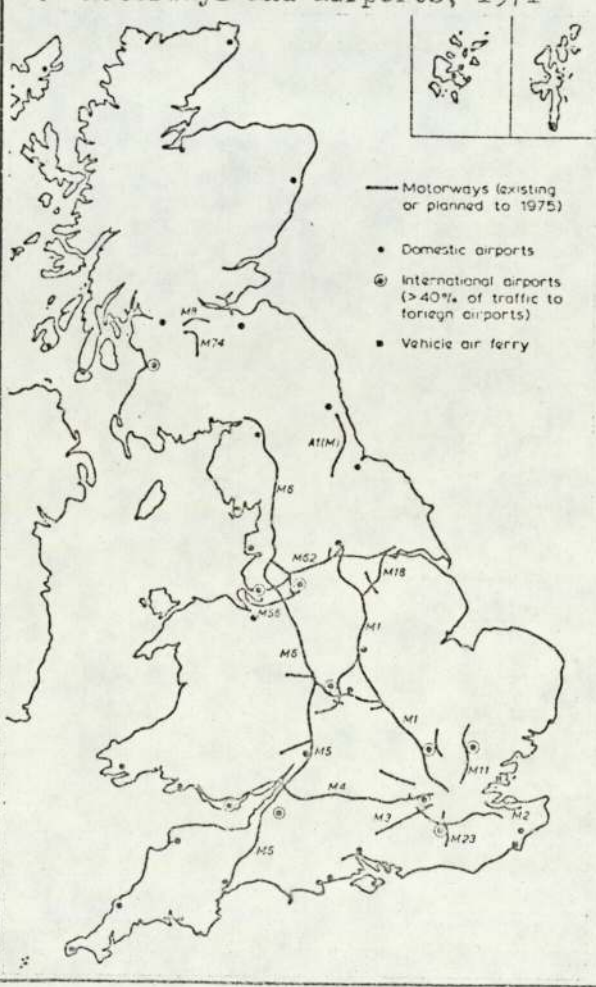
A. Unemployment, 1968



B. Depopulation, 1951-1966



C. Motorways and airports, 1971



D. Freightliner routes, 1971

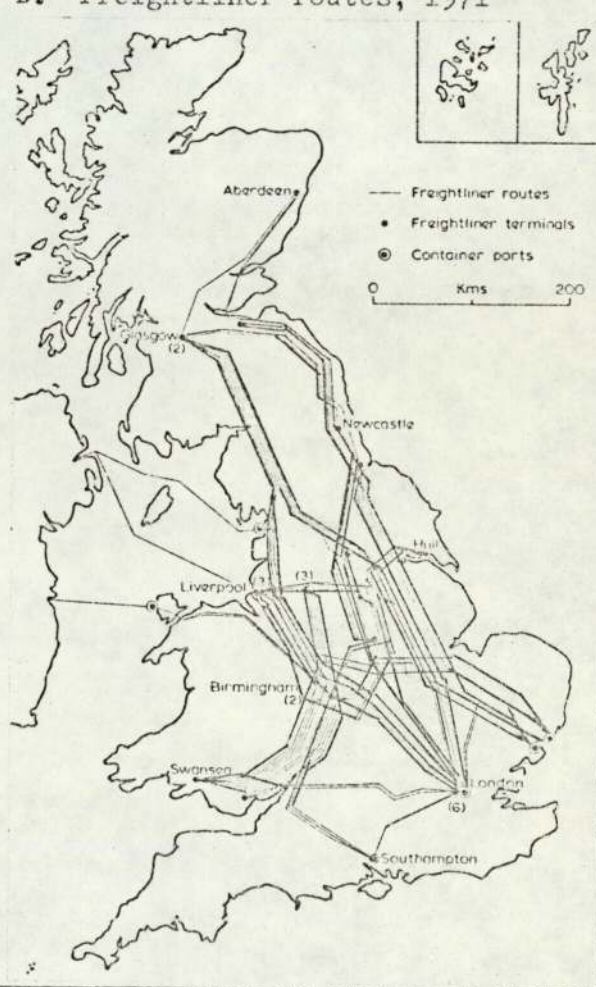
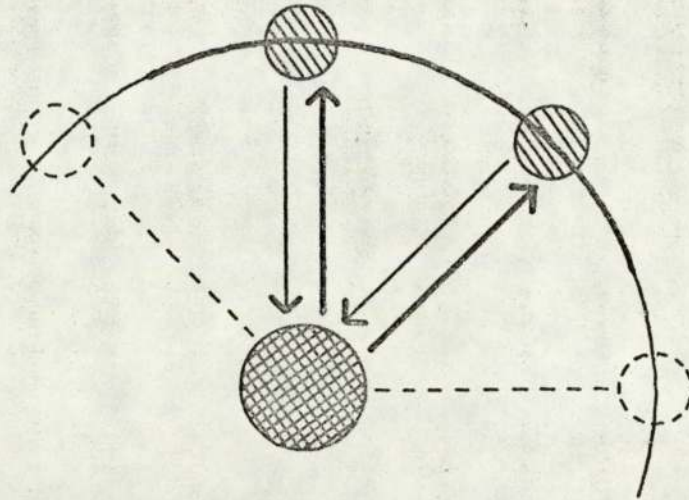


Figure 6.7 Britain: Some national systemic components

Source: Manners (1972)



The basic model  
 Simple, direct  
 centre-periphery  
 relationship  
 between central  
 and sub-central  
 government



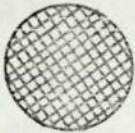

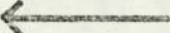

|   | Component   | Variable   |
|---|---|--|
|   | Centre/technique to be diffused: actual and conceptual representation of national entity          | Energy, resources, public policy instruments     |
|  | Periphery/recipients, adapters/users: actual and conceptual representation of sub-national entity | Extent, receptiveness, public policy instruments |
|  | Diffusion   | Diffusion infrastructure                         |
|  | Feedback  | Feedback effects                                 |

Figure 6.8 The centre-periphery model in town planning

Source: after Schon (1970)



the centre and its potential adapters or users at the periphery. Schon further postulates that a government should be both learning and experimenting for the society as a whole. But this process often fails because of government's inability to identify and give priority to critical issues, to respond to new problems, and to find appropriate and flexible policies solutions.

In the centre-periphery process "the policy may be simply promulgated; or the new policy may take the form of a law that's enforced; or resources may be provided ...; or government may play the 'propose-dispose game' with the regions - that is to say, the government formulates the policy, invites the regions to propose against the policy, reinforces and supports those who propose correctly by distributing funds and punishes those who propose incorrectly by withholding funds" (p.838). The problem is to overcome 'Schon's Law' - "that no idea is good currency if appropriate to the circumstances of its time" (p.836). Progress is being made through an increasing tendency for government "to function as a manager of networks, a facilitator and connector of what's happening in the regions rather than an imposer of central policy upon the regions", but Schon underlines the need for "existential knowing" - that is the need "to establish what's happening in the situation that requires public action; ... to diagnose problems and devise experiments to solve them; ... [and] to extend the results of experiment to the next situation and beyond that to large-scale programmes" (p.876).

We see the value of the Schon model in a town planning context as emphasising the relationship, albeit an unstable one, in governmental systems between centre, or national scale, and periphery, or sub-national scales. The centre is the system resulting from the aggregation of its component sub-systems, i.e. national spatial scale: the periphery is one or more of those component sub-systems at sub-national spatial scales, i.e. regional and/or local. This is illustrated in Figure 6.9 where the actual aggregate central



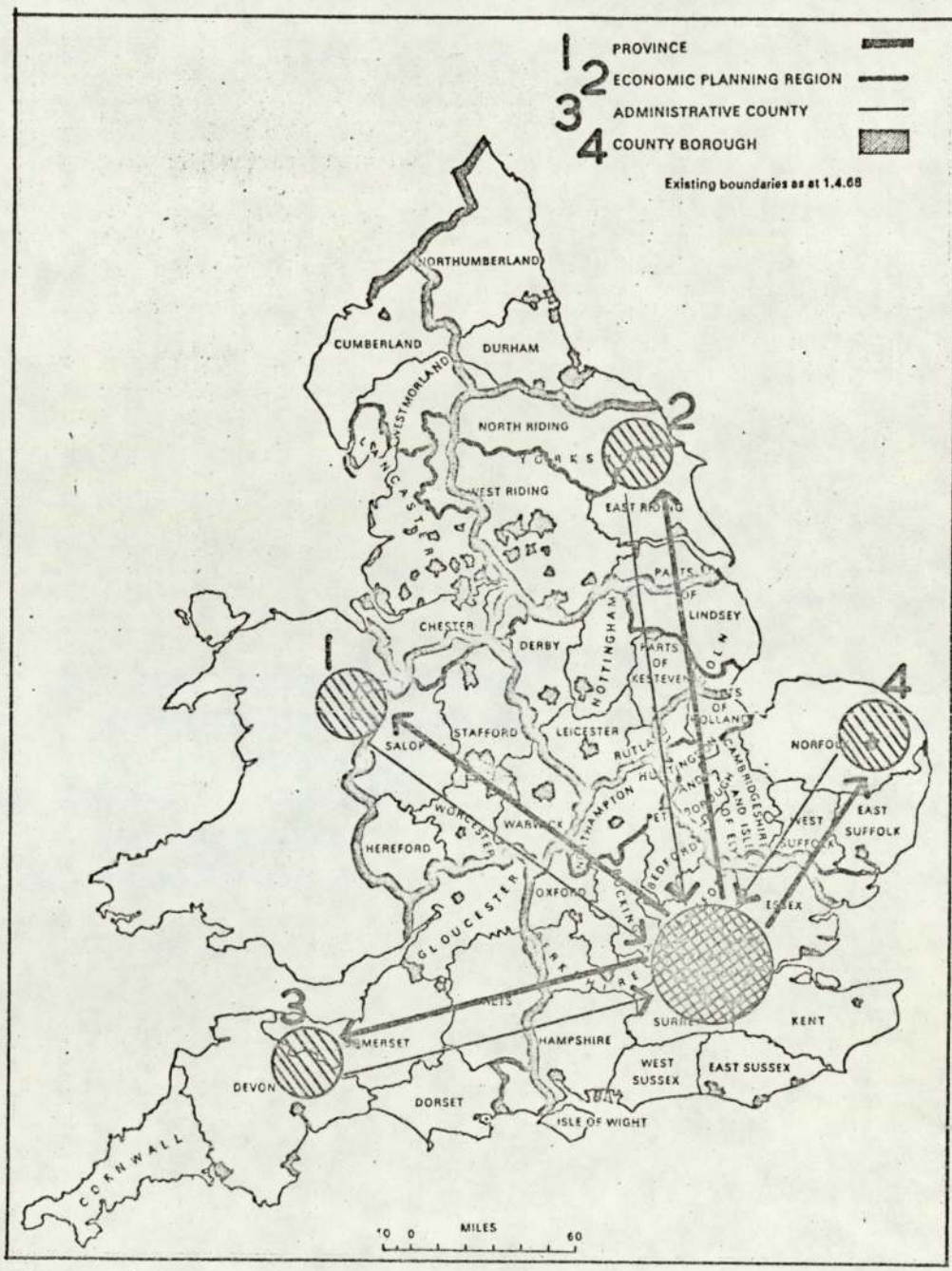


Figure 6.9 Britain: Some centre-periphery relationships

Source: original, based on Schon (1970), Maud Commission (1969)

For interpretation see Figure 6.8.



spatial entity is England and Wales, with its conceptual spatial focus and its actual governmental focus diagrammatically represented by the national capital, London: the component sub-systems comprising, collectively, the periphery and, individually, different peripheries are represented by provinces, economic planning regions, and local government units.

In centre-periphery relationships stress is laid not only on diffusion, but also on feedback. As Michael Geddes (1971, p.193) says "it can be strongly argued that it is an important function of regional planning to not accept national policies automatically, but to indicate if necessary, where and in what direction regional interests suggest changes in national policy". Thus a centre-periphery town planning model with adequate diffusion-feedback mechanisms should make for greater coherence in both devolution from Westminster and effectiveness in the regions and locally as anticipated by Circular 44/71 (para.69): "current planning processes are designed to secure that the relevant national and regional considerations are reflected in the structure plans of local planning authorities and that authorities in turn are able more effectively to inform and contribute to planning, at the regional and national level, on matters including but going beyond the development and use of land".

But perhaps the greatest potential value of centre-periphery relationships is in the concepts of existential knowing and of government as a public learning system. Chadwick has stated the need in town planning for modelling the national system. This would seem justifiable, initially in simple form, even if it did no more than clarify our understanding of its extreme complexities. As we have seen<sup>1</sup> such a need has been extensively advocated and is periodically highlighted by the apparent lack of context for such matters of national significance as major industrial location decisions, the London motorway box, the third London airport and the Channel Tunnel. In preparing a national plan we would learn - and in learning we would be better able to prepare a meaningful national plan.

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<sup>1</sup>Chapters 4 and 5.



### The Wilson model

In discussing 'How Planning can Respond to New Issues', A. G. Wilson (1973) suggests that an environmental system is made up of social, resource, and planning systems. The social system consists of people and households; the resource system comprises virtually everything else, including physical/spatial organisation; and the planning system seeks to achieve their control for the public good, so that planners will need to pursue social goals by means of resource objectives through public policy instruments (Figure 6.10). People's needs/wants are expressed as areas of concern from which social goals may be formulated and which, in turn, seek to achieve their satisfaction through resource objectives. Among these Wilson (p.30) includes "the land use system and spatial organisation of ... the physical environment", and he notes "that plans are usually stated in terms of ... resource objectives rather than in terms of social goals". Such a resource objective as "to provide a degree of spatial organisation ... specified in terms of land use, which ensures a proper interrelationship of different facilities" is clearly the province of town planning which is located within the model as a 'control system' in the 'regulation' category of public policy instruments.

The relevance of the Wilson model to our hypothesis lies in its identification of land use and spatial organisation as a primary resource objective, and consequently of town planning as a necessary public policy instrument,<sup>1</sup> dealing with physical phenomena as an integral sub-system, both comprehensive itself and itself part of a wider comprehensive approach to tackling resource problems in the public interest. For this task "an amalgam of 'old' disciplinary skills will not be good enough" (p.40) and we may need to consider "'meta-planning' - developing adequate policies in government about the planning and the governmental system itself. In other words, one of the most important issues of concern to planners is the invention of

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<sup>1</sup>The extent to which this is useful towards the realisation of social goals will of course depend upon the establishment of adequate goal-achievement indicators and of criteria for evaluation purposes.



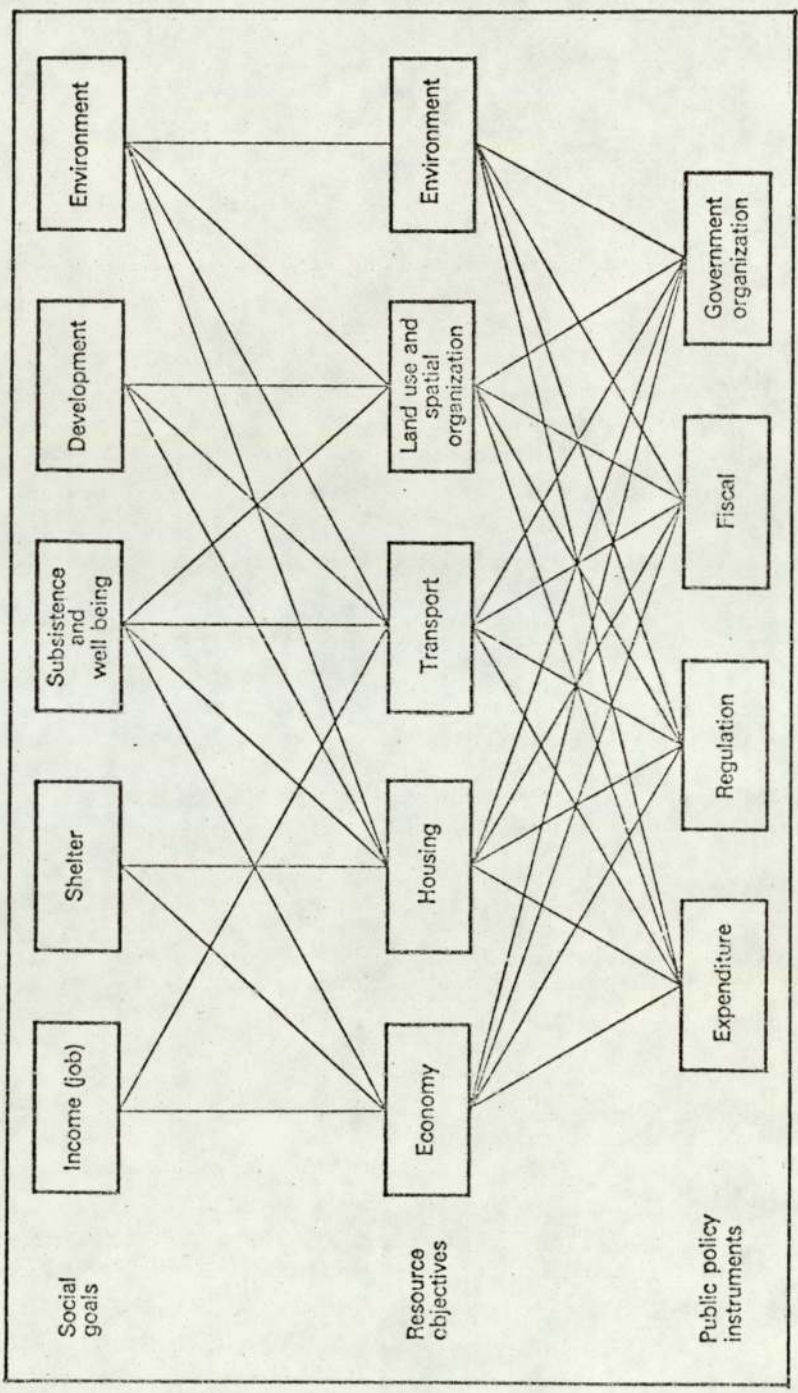


Figure 6.10 Goals, objectives and instruments: interrelationships within a planning process

Source: Wilson (1973)



adequate governmental technology" (p.42). A matter for such consideration might well be an indicative national physical plan.

To summarise, we suggest that, singly and collectively, these five models constitute powerful arguments for the concept of indicative national physical planning. Taking a nation-wide view they emphasise (i) the substantive focus of town planning; (ii) the importance of the physical dimension at any spatial scale; (iii) the national level as part of a systemic entity; (iv) the key nature of the role of the centre in governmental relationships with sub-central components; and (v) physical aspects as a resource objective of public policy in pursuit of social goals. Together they suggest the need for instrumental machinery to integrate their respective contributions in the form of some kind of national plan. The issues involved are succinctly put by Professor M. J. Wise (1960) who, referring to the need to co-ordinate activity and movement systems, asks "Where in the fields of national and regional planning is any serious attempt being made to utilise the location forces engendered by investment in transport in support of avowed national aims?" (p.32-33). He suggests that "co-ordination must be achieved at national, regional, conurbation and local levels", and that "the scale of town and country planning must be adjusted to meet changed conditions of industry and transport. In the past our plans have too often reckoned with only local or provincial problems [yet] we cannot afford to neglect the national view, planning our country as one social and economic unit. Seen from a European or World standpoint Great Britain is one industrial region, not a loose assemblage of many. Our need is for the formulation of a new policy in which physical planning and economic planning will be integrated for the whole country" (p.35). If this was the case in 1960 it has even greater relevance today: the following chapters analyse some of the major issues and suggest responses.



## Chapter 7

### OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK AND WORKING TOOLS

Significant changes in the development plan system and in local government organisation, brought about by the 1968 Act and the Local Government Act 1972, followed the Reports of Planning Advisory Group (1965) and the Maud Commission (1969): constitutional changes may well follow the Kilbrandon Commission (1973). The resultant new systems are likely to influence procedural characteristics of British town planning and its wider operational framework for some time.<sup>1</sup> In this chapter we consider the plan-making/administrative context within which macro town planning would have to take its place (Section A). We also consider the tools for town planning at national scale (Section B), bearing in mind both the undeveloped state of this field and the view that such questions as regionalisation require 'simple and pragmatic models free from excessive academic refinement' (Boudeville, 1968, p.75).

#### A. PLAN-MAKING AND ADMINISTRATION

In examining the plan-making and administrative frameworks to which an indicative national physical plan would have to relate, we emphasise (at the risk of seeming repetitious) certain key characteristics of the 1968 Act development planning system, not only because a national plan would need to be 'in phase' with them, but also because they provide a useful basis for developing (as we do in Chapter 10) a macro planning model.

##### Plan-making

The Planning Advisory Group considered that, without changing the form and content of development plans radically, the town planning system would not be a responsive and effective policy instrument. Accordingly the 1968 Act

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<sup>1</sup>This is assumed despite strong criticism of the new development plan system (by the 'management school' and G.L.D.P. Inquiry Panel); the unproven nature of local government 'reform'; and uncertainty about Kilbrandon.



introduced structure and local plans which jointly constitute a development plan. The structure plan, concerned with "formulating ... policy and general proposals in respect of the development and other use of land (including measures for the improvement of the physical environment ...)" (S.2(3)(a)), requires Ministerial approval: local plans, which give it detailed expression, are adopted locally.

The development plan seeks "to present the policies and proposals designed to achieve the stated planning aims [and] to satisfy social and economic aspirations as far as possible, through the creation of an efficient physical structure, and a good environment; the policies should be set out to provide a framework for the continuous process of making planning decisions and the proposals should be expressed as firm statements of intended action" (M.H.L.G., 1970, para.2.2). All component plans have complementary functions and in combination they offer a comprehensive basis for town planning (para.2.5): structure plans provide a framework for local plans which will apply their policies in detail (para.2.6). The development plan as a decision document should initiate, encourage and control changes, making clear its aims, policies, and proposals as well as how, when and where they will be implemented (para.2.9).

Structure plans<sup>1</sup> are required by the 1968 Act to deal with matters expected to affect development and the planning of it (S.1(1)) - inter alia, physical and economic characteristics, including purposes for which land is used; size, composition and distribution of population; and communications, transport systems and traffic (S.1(3)(a)(b)(c)) - and will express policies and strategy for broadly 20 years. In this process regard must be had "to current policies with respect to the economic planning and development of the

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<sup>1</sup>Structure is "the social, economic and physical systems of an area, so far as they are subject to planning control or influence: [it] is, in effect, the planning framework for an area and includes such matters as the distribution of population, the activities and the relationships between them, the patterns of land use and the development the activities give rise to, together with the network of communications and the systems of utility services" (M.H.L.G., 1970, para.3.6).



region as a whole" (S.2(4)(a)) and "to the resources likely to be available ..." (S.2(4)(b)). The Development Plans Manual (M.H.L.G., 1970, paras.4.4.-4.5) states that structure plans must relate to "national and regional setting". So, Government recognises wider macro context but provides no machinery to deal with it. Indeed "the interest of central government in physical planning is concerned less with the detail of land use than with the development of population and employment, the interrelationships of traffic and land use in terms of urban renewal, and with equality of environment in town and country in terms of development standards, recreational opportunities and community services" (P.A.G., 1965, para.1.3). At local level "these issues must be translated into terms of land allocation" (para.1.4) as part of regional and sub-regional patterns (para.1:43) within the framework of national economic planning, which inevitably involves physical planning issues and factors of regional significance, and interaction between economic and physical planning and development (para.1:44).

Neither the 1968 Act nor supporting Regulations specifically mention national context, but the Development Plans Manual discusses how "development plans must be prepared and examined in the light of national and regional planning policies" (M.H.L.G., 1970, para.1.5) and lists among the structure plan's functions "interpreting national and regional policies" (para.3.10).<sup>1</sup> The regional economic planning councils' studies, and the Government's observations, provide "guidance on some of the matters which are fundamental to the preparation of ... plans set in national and regional context" (para.1.5) as part of a continuous process, and structure plans "must take their place in national and regional strategies" (para.2.13). And since "the structure plan will have regional and national significance [it] will have to relate, therefore, to wider strategic frameworks at these levels" (para.4.4). This will involve "policies for major physical developments in which there

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<sup>1</sup>See also D.O.E. Circular 44/71 and Memorandum (paras.44-45 and 69).



is considerable national investment<sup>1</sup> [and] less tangible policies which find little direct physical expression",<sup>2</sup> guided by published government material and regional offices (para.4.5).

In these circumstances, wherein the Minister exercises overview of major strategic issues and the importance of macro context cannot be denied, it may be thought paradoxical that there is no indicative plan at national scale. It is our contention that this should be remedied by further changes in the development plan system to include more formal and positive action at national level by an appropriate adaptation of the essential features of the structure planning procedure just outlined.

#### Administration

The 'new' development planning system as a policy instrument has to relate to the 'new' administrative framework. A keynote of both the Maud Commission (1969) on Local Government in England and the Local Government Act 1972 was larger authorities, wider context and emphasis towards the macro scale of activity. The Maud Commission's proposal for eight provinces whose councils would "settle the provincial strategy and planning framework ..., replace the present regional economic planning councils and collaborate with central government in the economic and social development of each province" (para.4) has largely been accepted by the Kilbrandon Commission (1973) on the Constitution as a basis for regional executive devolution (para.1191). The Maud Report noted that "some planning decisions can be made only at national level. The central government must, moreover, be satisfied that over the country as a whole, all needs for land will somehow be met, and that the local plans ... add up to a coherent and practical pattern of development for the whole country" (para.50), with similar considerations for transportation (para.54). The Commission was influenced, but not fully persuaded, by the

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<sup>1</sup>For example, national/inter-regional routes (road and rail), ports, airports, power stations and new cities/towns.

<sup>2</sup>For example, policies for the distribution of employment, for recreation and the use of the countryside.



city region concept in formulating its proposals (paras.113-125, 158-162), among which the strategic plans at provincial level (paras.412-415) implied complementary action at national scale.

Provincial plans<sup>1</sup> would need the Minister's approval: constituent "structure plans should together compose an integrated pattern for the whole of each province [having] consistency with each other and with the provincial plan" (para.414). But in what context would the Minister have examined the provincial plans? - and how does he now examine those of the regional economic planning councils for consistency and continuity in the absence of an indicative national plan? No decisions on the Kilbrandon Report are yet forthcoming, but the Commission's views on devolution to Scotland, Wales and the English regions were dependent upon the belief "that the essential political and economic unity of the United Kingdom should be preserved", subject to which "diversity should be recognised" (para.1104). Thus, if economic unity is to be accompanied by devolution (substantial for Scotland and Wales, less so for England) and, as 'The National Plan' (D.E.A., 1965) and Lean (1967) urged, it is necessary that regional, national, economic and physical planning should be integrated, then any implementation of Kilbrandon will require a strong and effective unitary approach to macro physical planning questions.

Despite "extensions to the boundaries of planning thought and action ... from the local to the regional and the national" (Ling, 1969, p.285) there remain doubts concerning regionalism in Britain (Jones, 1966, p.64)

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<sup>1</sup>In these plans, key elements would be "the changing distribution of population migration to and from a province, the location of major new growth points, the large scale movement of people from one unitary or metropolitan area into another, the broad division of the province into urbanised, agricultural and recreational areas, major industrial developments with their implications for employment, housing and transport, the provincial pattern of road and rail communications, the siting of airports, the future of seaports, and the siting of new universities and of cultural and sporting facilities serving a wide area" (Maud Commission, 1969, para.412).



and, equally, doubts concerning national planning.<sup>1</sup> The 1968 Act system and government reorganisation suggest the necessity for integrated relationships over the spatial range of development planning. Every spatial scale except the macro now has a plan-formulation role (Figure 3.4) and town planning might be much facilitated if, at national scale, there was a plan to focus the welter of policy; as Professor J. N. Jackson (1972, p.45) observes "there has been a gradual appreciation that intervention in the affairs of the environment requires a unitary approach by government". If comprehensive plans are required at local scales, why is disjointed incrementalism good enough for Whitehall? - and why do we shirk a plan for our entire national territory?

#### B. METHODOLOGY AND TECHNIQUE<sup>2</sup>

Despite considerable pioneering (United Nations, 1958; Council of Europe, 1968; Kuklinski, 1969; Hermansen, 1970), it is largely true that if the physical planner's "responsibilities were suddenly extended to the national level, there is reason to question whether [his] education and experience equip him to formulate the planner's point of view on national development policy" (Rodwin, 1959, p.47) as part of his "continuing concern with the physical infrastructure and spatial organisation" (Wilson, 1973, p.24). This may be offset, however, by adapting 'universal' methodologies and techniques,<sup>3</sup> many of which are applicable to all scales of planning, provided the problem is complex enough to justify their use (Thorburn, 1970, p.172).

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<sup>1</sup> But in the mid 1950s the West Midlands Group (1956, pp.285-286) had noted "that decisions concerning major developments in local services often require to be made in the light of information and decisions about ... the nation's internal and external affairs. There is ... a clear need for the co-ordination of local and national policies [and] at national level for more frequent and more effective consultation between Ministers and local government authorities".

<sup>2</sup> Methodology is seen as a body of broad operational principles within which techniques are applied to investigate more specific aspects.

<sup>3</sup> For example, formulation of goals/objectives; system description/data requirements; forecasting/simulation; plan-making and selection; and system guidance, control and review (McLoughlin, 1969).



### Methodology

A national approach to town planning, as a facet of national resource management, requires the means for reconciling aggregation and disaggregation of policies and proposals between national and regional scales. It implies plan-making at each level and has two main aspects:-

- (a) the apportionment of resources to the development of physical infrastructure having regard to both sectoral and global considerations; and
- (b) the co-ordination of physical proposals.

This involves the key concept of regionalisation wherein the characteristics of regional planning and of the plans produced will depend upon the nature of both the regional bodies concerned and the central approach.

British experience suggests three main variations (McCrone, 1969): first, advisory bodies having plan-making, though not executive power, may be uninhibited but make little real impact on government policy; second, executive bodies with powers to formulate and implement proposals would require strong central co-ordination to ensure national compatibility of objectives among regions; and third, regional bodies, nominated or elected, might prepare plans "which imply a commitment on the part of central government [and] a full reconciliation of national and regional objectives", including a geographical dimension of national strategy (pp.246-247).<sup>1</sup> It may be difficult to tackle spatially what economic planning has failed to deal with in quantitative terms, but promise is offered by, for example, the methodological approach outlined by Hermansen (1970) for the reconciliation of problems such as aggregation/disaggregation and sectoral/global relationships.

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<sup>1</sup> Examples of the first and second models are the regional economic planning councils and the Highlands and Islands Development Board respectively, but there is no example of the third model.



Regionalisation - the distribution of national sectoral allocations between regions in a manner compatible with regional and national objectives - "involves spatial considerations from above as well as sectoral considerations from below" (Hermansen, 1970, p.430) and embodies both 'substantive' (plan-making) and 'control' (plan-implementation) activities/decisions. Decision space in national planning must provide for translating national aggregates into local details (Figure 7.1). Thus, from macro (A) to substantive micro (F) levels, decisions on sectoral allocations must be reconciled between, and also within, sectors (B and D) and, in spatial terms, between and within regions (C and E): it is the differentiation of decisions of national importance (B and C) from other decisions that identifies the discrete spatial field of national planning. In other words, the distinctive function of national planning will be macro level allocations to and between sectors and regions. To do this, it must develop its own aggregate context within which to 'manage' the disaggregated regional components: its output will be an analytical plan "directed towards co-ordination of substantive decisions" (p.432) supported by the necessary institutional planning machinery required for its implementation and administration.

National planning therefore involves a macro stage which establishes the overall framework of the plan and an inter-sectoral stage relating the contribution of each sector to global objectives. But sectoral and inter-sectoral matters must also be viewed spatially through inter-regional planning so that the whole can be allocated to its constituent parts (regions) and the parts can be seen as a whole. And, because sectors will include physical aspects requiring spatial aggregation and disaggregation, national planning will inevitably have a physical dimension. Figure 7.2 illustrates the combined process of inter-regional disaggregation of national plans (splitting up and distribution to various regions of parts of national sectoral allocations) and national aggregation of regional plans (summation and balancing of regional proposals). The major problem is to reconcile



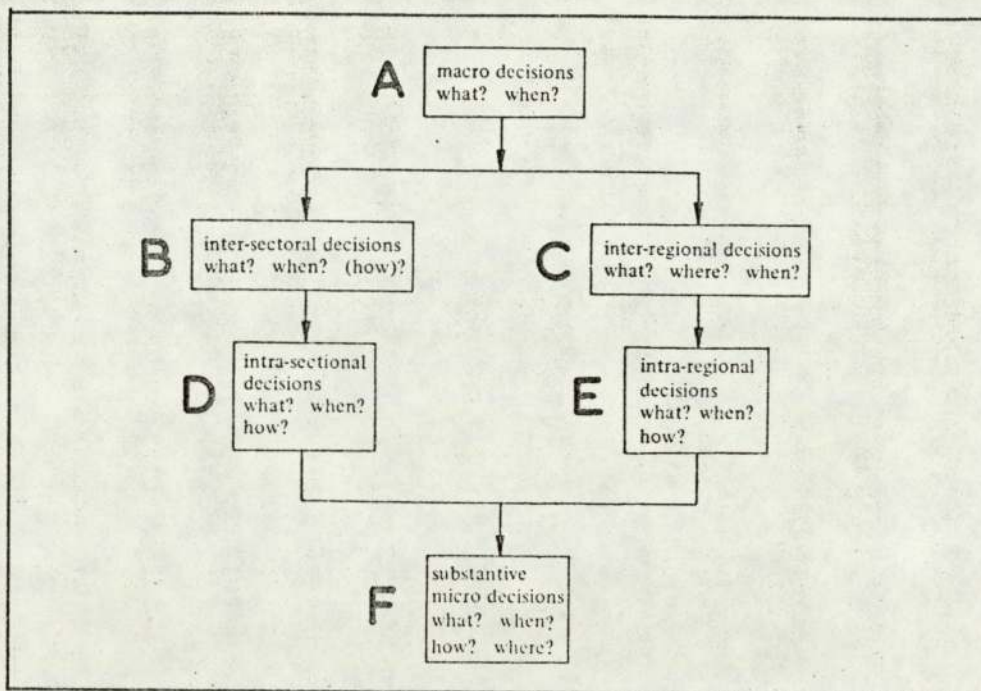


Figure 7.1 Decision space in national planning

Source: Hermansen (1970)

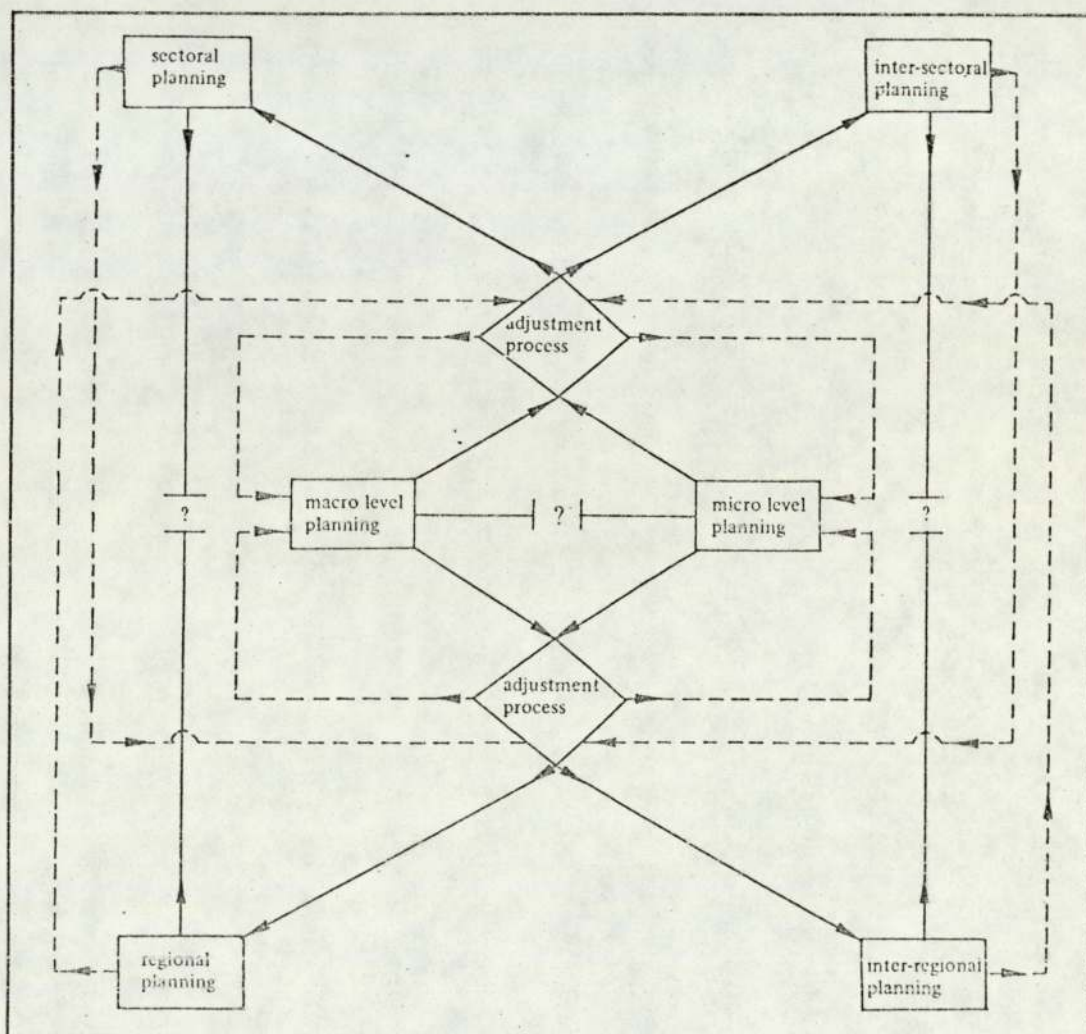


Figure 7.2 Combined disaggregation/aggregation approach to regional and inter-regional planning

Source: Hermansen (1970)



objectives of individual regions with those for the nation as a whole.

Hermansen (1970, pp.439-440) suggests that "the key question ... is that of optimal distribution of decision making authority among sectoral and regional authorities at the various levels and between the levels": the answer lies in establishing the degree of intervention needed to secure optimum interaction between sectoral and global considerations and in the ability to provide an effective information system to this end.

Regionalisation of national planning is seen "as a social experiment within the broad scale national learning process"<sup>1</sup>, including the arrangement of institutional instruments in a hierarchy related to the spatial scope of the activities they seek to influence. Thus, the challenge for national planning is "to construct a system of planning models and to design an institutional framework" (compatible with the matters discussed in Section A) suitable to its purpose.

#### Technique

National and regional economic planning rely heavily on techniques of economic analysis while in sub-regional planning, geographical analysis is popular: both appear capable of wider application in the development and orientation of regional science and spatial analysis (Isard, 1960; Haggett, 1966) towards macro problems. Hall (1967, 1970) shows that regional plan formulation can extend to a national dimension involving multiple objective physical considerations; may be subject to a 'traditional' planning sequence; and requires more effective descriptive, predictive and evaluative modelling.

In an economic context, techniques are needed by which to consider nationally what regional pattern of activity will give the most development for the least input of real resources; to forecast the probable course of development in the regions so that problems may be identified and tackled; and to resolve any gaps between regional development and regional aspirations by means of regional strategies (McCrone, 1969, pp.240-255). These

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Schon (1970).



principles are equally relevant in a national physical context and their application may require the adaptation of existing rather than new techniques. Although econometric analysis is widely used at regional and national scales, adequate data and predictive methods for analysing what spatial distributions of activity offer the greatest net social benefit are generally lacking. These defects were highlighted and regretted by the Colston Research Society Symposium on 'Regional Forecasting' (Chisholm, 1971). For example, a reliable method of predicting interregional flows related to the distribution of economic activities and movement costs would enable the evaluation of regional economic development proposals in terms of transport requirements and allow the impact of transport facility improvements on the spatial structure of the economy to be assessed (O'Sullivan, 1971). Such methods would be of obvious utility to town planners and, together with the development of geographical analysis techniques, seem to warrant further investigation as a potential basis for modelling the nation in physical terms.

First, a fuller use of gravity modelling might help the understanding of, and planning for, large scale consequences of human activities (Styles, 1968; Batty, 1969, 1970), despite the handicap of spatially disaggregated output being dependent upon spatially aggregated inputs which are subject to forecasting inaccuracies. Application of the gravity principle<sup>1</sup> could well further plan-/decision-making in respect of the national spatial patterning of activity and movement systems, using this technique's ability to distribute population in relation to employment and transportation to assist in the development of and choice between major alternative settlement policies and proposals (e.g. consolidation/dispersal; new conurbations/cities/towns; or renewal/improvements).

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<sup>1</sup>That the interaction between two spatial 'situations' is directly related to their masses and inversely related to their distance apart.



Second, potential models<sup>1</sup> might play a large part in macro locational decisions in its various guises, including economic potential (Clark, 1966) and potential surface (Centre for Environmental Studies, 1970). In the case of the former, indices of economic potential are used to reflect the attraction of an area for industry. The indices may be affected by such key variables as political and physical change (Clark et al, 1969): thus Britain's potential prior to joining the Common Market improves substantially after entry, and dramatically if the Channel Tunnel is built (Figure 7.3). These different situations clearly have important ramifications for physical planning on a national scale. Potential surface technique has been extensively used by the physical planner at sub-regional scale (Notts-Derby Sub-Regional Planning Unit, 1969; Coventry C.C., Solihull C.B.C. and Warwickshire C.C., 1971): granted that inputs could be standardised and reconciled, there seems no reason why the aggregation of regional models should not be used to assess national potential nor why such a model should not be produced independently at national scale.

Third, the general body of central place theory<sup>2</sup> (Christaller, 1933; Losch, 1940; Hoover, 1948; Isard, 1956) has given rise to a family of models dealing with the spatial incidence of socio-economic activity that is basic to effective physical planning. Central place issues include the poles of growth theory developed by F. Perroux and L. E. Davin (McCrone, 1969; Cameron, 1971; Hermansen, 1971); economies of agglomeration/deglomeration (Klassen, 1965; McCrone, 1969); and urban process, hierarchies and fields (Smailes, 1944, 1947; Green, 1950; Carruthers, 1957; Dickinson, 1964; Smith, R., 1968). Growth centres have become a key concept in macro economic planning: perhaps more attention could usefully be given to the concept of a

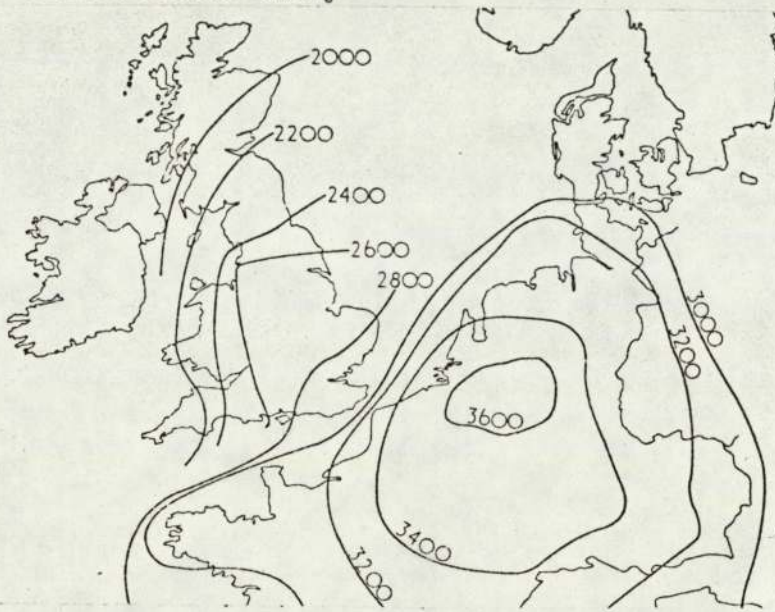
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<sup>1</sup>Measuring the potential interaction of a place relative to other places in terms of accessibility/attraction factors.

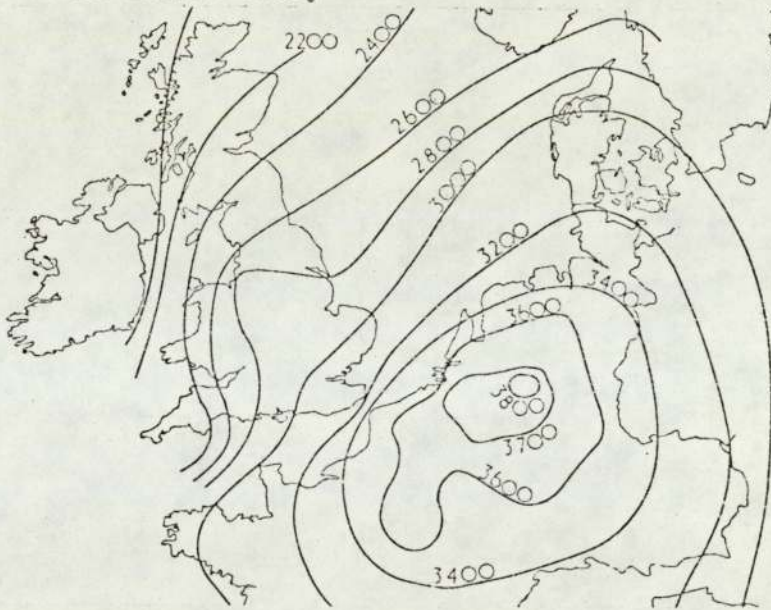
<sup>2</sup>That the functions of places are directly related to their size and distance apart calculated from such key variables as transport/distance costs, availability of raw materials, labour and markets.



A. Before E.E.C. entry



B. After E.E.C. entry



C. Channel Tunnel

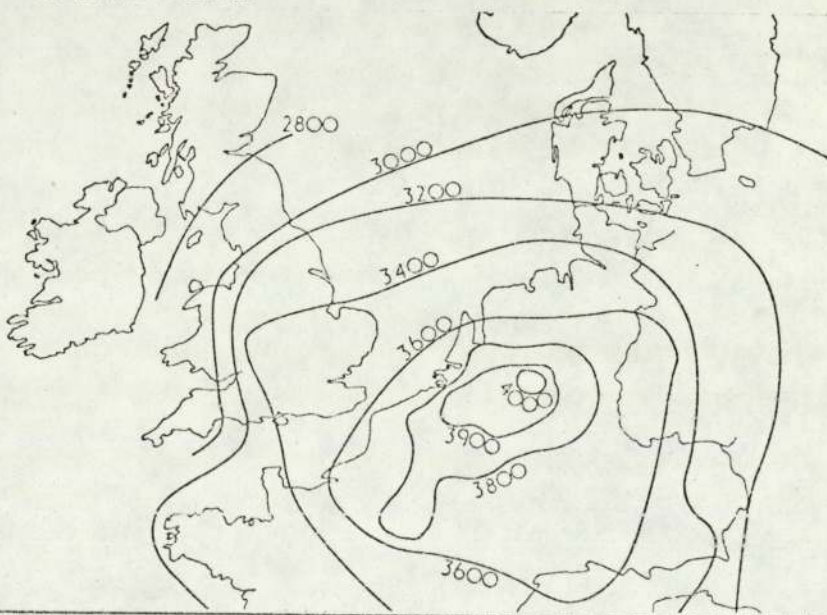


Figure 7.3 Britain and Western Europe: Impact of different situations on indices of economic potential

Source: Clark et al (1969)



national urban hierarchy (Figure 7.4) as a social/economic/physical planning tool in which capacity it has been applied in France (Figure 7.5), forming an integral element of macro intervention and strategy (Boudeville, 1968; Hansen, N., 1968).

Fourth, there is the use of the factor/principal component/cluster analysis group of techniques<sup>1</sup> to identify problems and critical areas. Multivariate technique was applied in the identification of 'grey' areas in Lancashire (Smith, D., 1968) and component analysis has proved useful in isolating population and landscape characteristics (Broady, 1965; West Midland Regional Study, 1971). G. Armen (1972) concludes from the use of elementary cluster analysis<sup>2</sup> "that the character of a city region ... is at present largely determined by the character of the city on which it is centred" (Figure 7.6) and that "the state of diffusion of the five principal forms of urban life available in this country today" gives a rough guide to the standard of living attainable in a given place based on activity, possession and opportunity characteristics which different regional types offer (Figure 7.7). He claims that his approach both indicates that the ability of planning to effect changes in the city will also cause changes in the character of its region, and provides a tool for assessing these changes nationally: "classification of city regions from Census to Census could help not only towards monitoring their relative change and the development of various forms of urban living, but also towards providing an insight to the likely pressures for development in various parts of the country" (p.178).

Armen's contribution illustrates that techniques for town planning at national scale can be developed. They might range from the application

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<sup>1</sup>Resolving complex situations by establishing a single index which will act as proxy for innumerable indices from which it was derived.

<sup>2</sup>In a comparative study of 100 cities and their regions, physically delimited and classified by 130 characteristics of people, place and activity. Cf. Moser and Scott (1961), Andrews (1971).



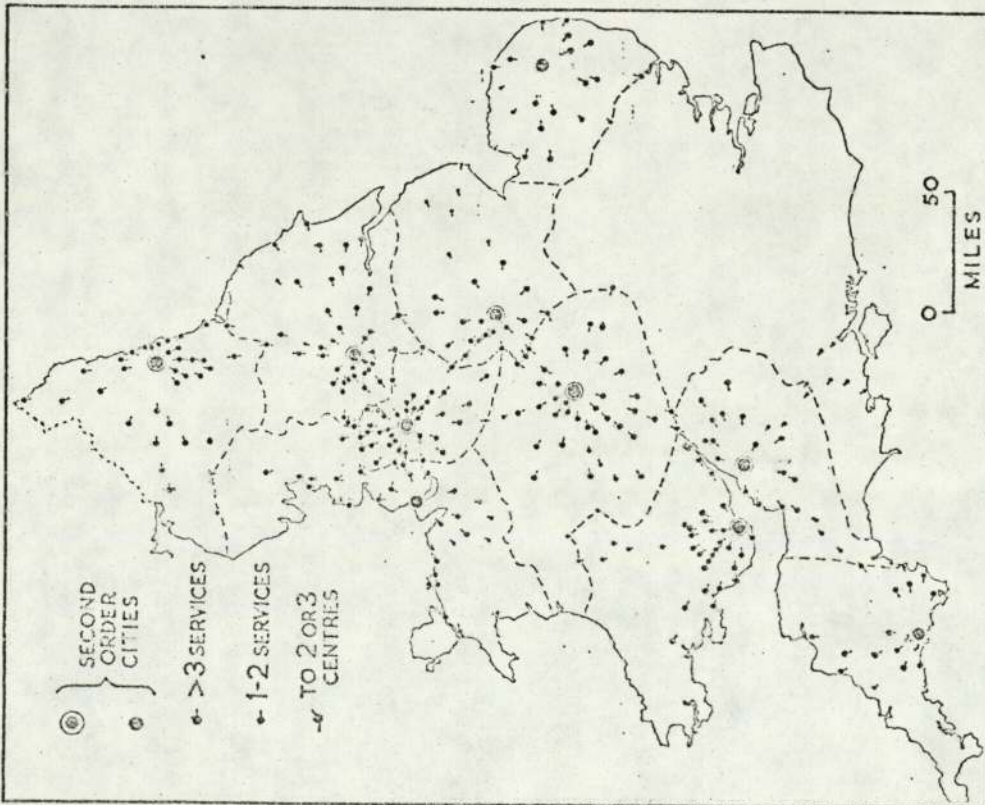


Figure 7.4 England and Wales: A national urban hierarchy - second-order centres and their hinterlands

Source: Dickinson (1964), after Carruthers (1957)

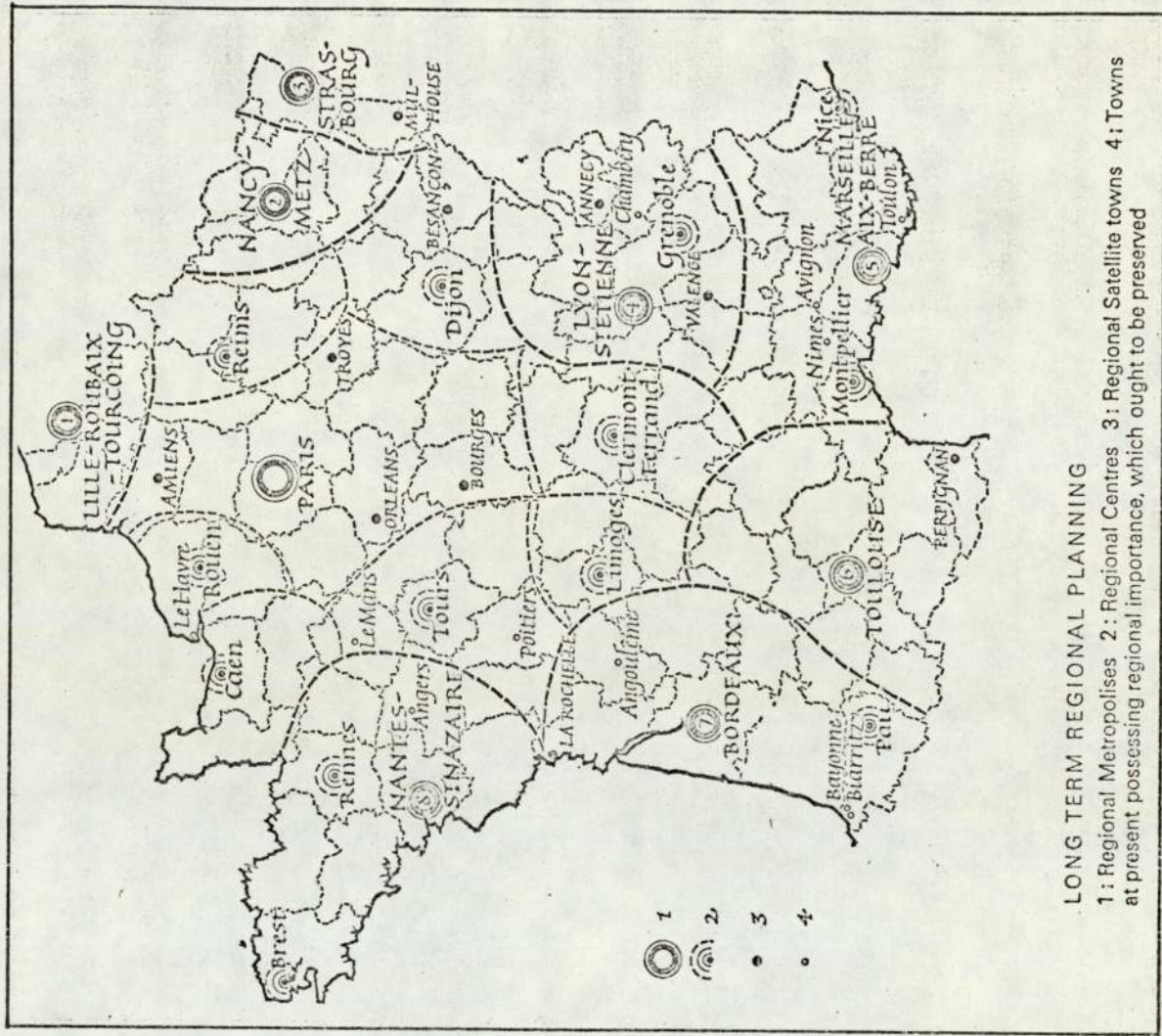


Figure 7.5 France: Métropolises d'équilibre

Source: Boudeville (1968)



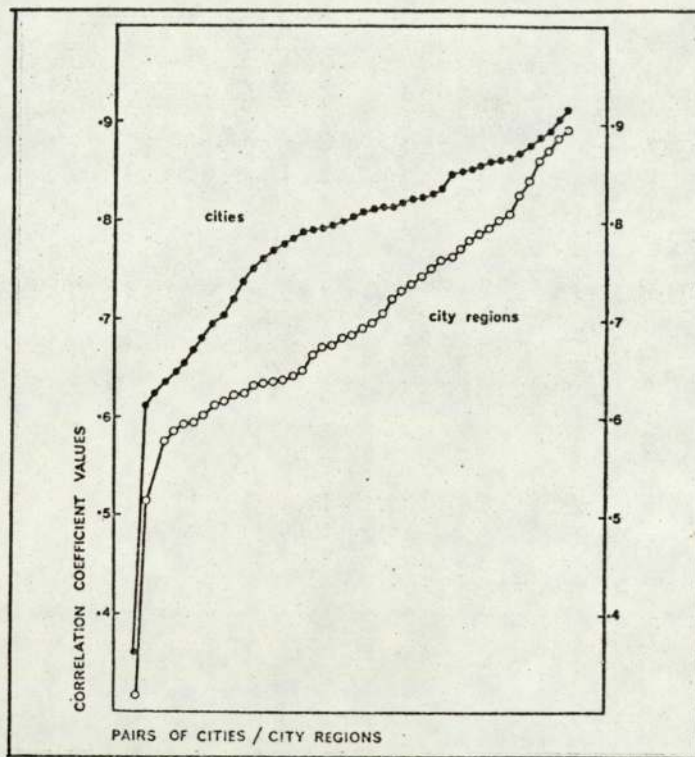


Figure 7.6 England and Wales: Correlation of pairs of cities/city regions

Source: Armen (1972)

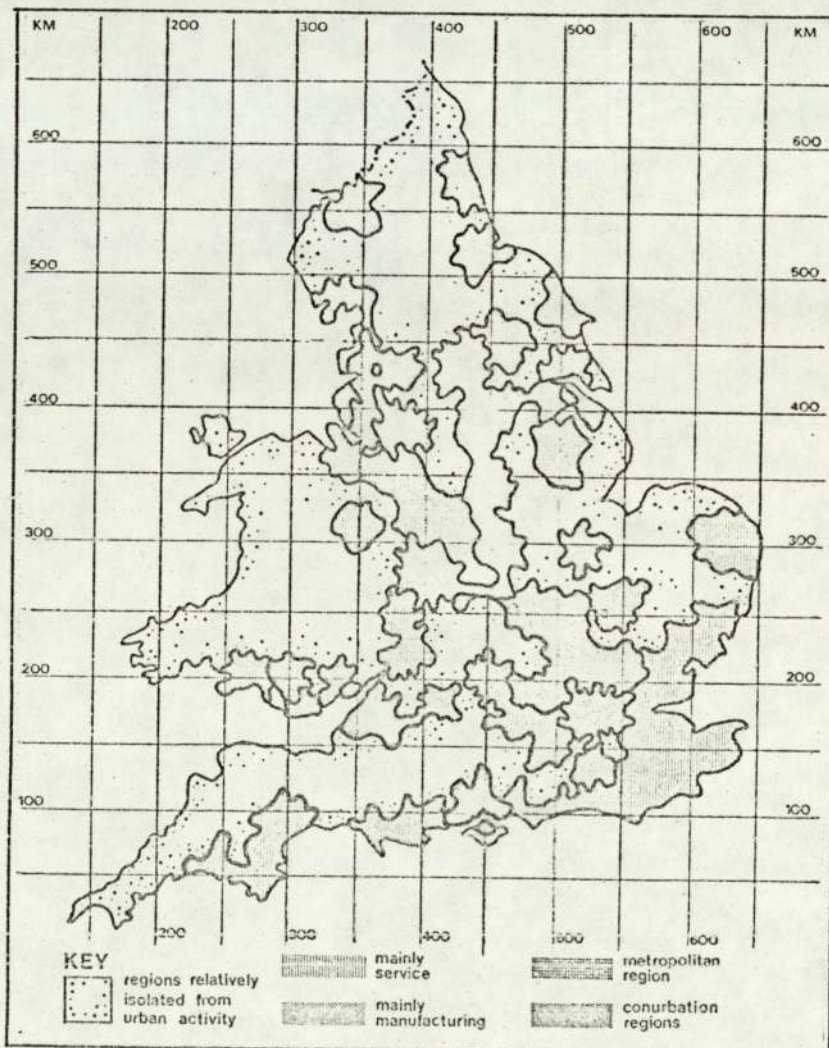


Figure 7.7 England and Wales: Principal activity regions, 1966

Source: Armen (1972)



of simple sieve methods to complex mathematical system modelling; they might involve, for example, adapting threshold theory (Koslowski and Hughes, 1972) to macro purposes, or applying such work as that on national modelling by Lionel March (1969) at the University of Cambridge Centre for Land Use and Built Form Studies. March attempts to obtain national futures by relating motorway accessibility to population trend projection on a grid for England and Wales in order to forecast market populations for each cell: he then introduces local variation by a growth function/cell attractiveness model using factors which are easily quantified (e.g. length of motorway per head of population) in a proxy role for those which are not (e.g. accessibility and congestion).

Such approaches would need to be accompanied by a complementary development of procedural techniques: the dissaray which occurred over the third London airport underlined the necessity for major developments of national significance to be evolved in the light of adequate context and evaluative methods (Kitchen, 1972). Therefore, the systematic application of a planning sequence including viable methods of evaluating alternative futures (Prest and Turvey, 1965; Lichfield, 1956; Hill, 1968) in the light of national goals/objectives (Lichfield, 1968; Chadwick, 1971; Buchanan, 1972) seems to be a necessary prerequisite in dealing with physical aspects of resource allocation at macro scale. Macro town planning questions must thus be reconciled with their wider corporate setting (Eddison, 1968; Stewart and Eddison, 1971; Stewart, 1971) and it appears "that there will develop in central government somewhat similar planning/management operations as have been identified for local government" (Amos, 1971, p.306) so that perhaps P.P.B.S. technique and the need for a technology for strategic choice<sup>1</sup> will be just as important as at local authority level (Friend and Jessop, 1969).

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<sup>1</sup>Finding solutions, expressing preferences, exploiting latent uncertainties, selecting exploratory actions and selecting immediate commitments.



An essential starting point would be effective research/information systems for planning (Lichfield, 1966a) including national and regional scales (Tress, 1967) and an early 1950s view of P.E.P. (1951b) is still relevant: "... since land use planning should be a continuing process and since it has to be carried out at national scale, a consecutive series of ... 'national budget studies' is required [to] provide a running account of national resources and needs [and] to measure to effectiveness of planning itself" (p.97). Ignorance of urban land use, locational/developmental processes, and priorities, and the lack of a "comprehensive national picture of the pattern of our towns" (p.98) should be attacked by an independent Government-financed national research institution<sup>1</sup> seeking to "provide a continuous comparison between development proposals and their results" (p.99) and giving "technical assistance [on] all aspects of urban and rural land use, physical, economic and social" (p.119). More recently the Department of the Environment (1971, para.5.19) observed that "in considering the distribution of population and the possible ways in which population growth might be accommodated, ideally it would be desirable to know the comparative resource costs of different forms of development". There should be "greater attention paid to this field of research" including, for example, studies of relative costs and benefits of peripheral development against short/long-distance overspill in terms of, say, urban infrastructure and cost of moving industry or improving communications to existing locations.

We conclude that present gaps in methodology and technique are no insuperable barrier to macro scale planning: what is needed is a national data bank/technical advisory/monitoring service to provide the necessary descriptive, predictive and evaluative basis for indicative national physical planning. It would be well, however, for any such developments to heed lessons of the Greater London Development Plan Panel of Inquiry (1973, pp.24-28)

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Eire's An Foras Forbartha Teoranta - the National Institute for Physical Planning and Construction Research (Dower, 1965b).



concerning (a) over ambition; (b) inconsistent treatment of the substance; (c) failure to relate information to policies; (d) failure to relate policies to aims; (e) failure to present aims in meaningful terms; and (f) failure to distinguish between what is strategic material and what is not.



ISSUES FOR NATIONAL PHYSICAL PLANNING

Structure plans have to take their place within national strategy: thus any such strategy should take account of the social, economic and physical systems concerning which structure planning authorities formulate their statutory policies and proposals. In this chapter we consider issues for national planning by examining, through the Le Play Model, some major social/economic/physical facets and interrelationships at macro scale. Particularly we focus upon the physical system. This is both the most tangible and intractable, for, although social needs change and economic conditions fluctuate, physical infrastructure is relatively stable, costly, long term and inflexible. Therefore, while its function, nationally, in accommodating and facilitating or restricting socio-economic aspirations should be kept in firm perspective,<sup>1</sup> it must never be undervalued. This chapter tries to identify aspects of the social and economic systems which have important physical manifestations (Sections A and B respectively) and considers ways in which the physical system may respond to socio-economic requirements (Section C).

A. THE SOCIAL SYSTEM : 'FOLK'

The dialogue between sociology and town planning has an uneasy promise<sup>2</sup> (Broady, 1968). Recognition "that social problems can rarely be solved with physical solutions" (Pahl, 1971, p.24) may be countered by the views that "physical plans should ... meet social requirements" (Cherry, 1970, p.47) and that "social interactions are proportional to the amount of spatial

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<sup>1</sup>The social/economic perspective may be seen in terms of desirable level, distribution and security of income (Brown, 1972, pp.1-2); in economic/physical terms "the dominant theme governing town planning must surely be the economic one ... to live graciously if one can, but first to live" (Sharp, 1964, p.226); and in social/physical terms it is "axiomatic that the matters of which town planning treats are unmistakably and irrevocably social in character" (Ash, 1966, p.91).

<sup>2</sup>Sociological techniques should articulate physical forms in a two-way interaction between social and physical patterns (Ash, 1966).



contact" (Foley, 1964, p.45). Social planning may be seen as "attempts, consciously undertaken, to influence and determine features of the social environment" which result from "the need to promote or control changes in our way of life and in our society": but it is inseparable from economic and physical considerations as in new towns where "critical problems remain to be overcome at both micro and macro levels [including] a comprehensive and appropriate set of objectives ... to guide planning" (Webb, 1971, p.187). It is, indeed, still true that "social research has done little to map out the general picture of ... the countrywide social pattern of regions, towns and villages" (Ogilvy and Cook, 1964, p.190).

Proper provision for human contact to satisfy individual and collective needs and the determination of priorities are among the foci for social planning defined by G. E. Cherry (1970) who says that social issues for the town planner<sup>1</sup> should be tackled through a policy framework which includes national aspects.<sup>2</sup> But at macro scale the social role of town planning is not easy to define. We suggest, however, that by analysing settlements in terms of their size, function, form, structure, location and distribution, and by using these factors in a proxy role for the broad range of social satisfaction which different patterns would afford, it should be possible to establish performance criteria for choosing between alternative large scale physical arrangements.

### Population

The basis of all social considerations is population, yet there have been few explicit attempts by central government to influence its spatial incidence. Efforts to guide population distribution have been largely indirect assistance

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<sup>1</sup>Including changes in society (e.g. magnitude and pace of urbanism, life styles); changes in urban structure; movement of population; environment/behaviour interactions; and leisure.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. the social engineering and administration approach to environmental/social causality at local scale (Willis, 1970; Flynn, 1971).



to development areas and industrial development certificate restraint in the fortunate regions, 'new communities' policy, green belts and the reinforcement of Megalopolis England by heavy resource allocation. The lack of any positive population policy is substantially attributable to the failure of the Royal Commission on Population which reported in 1949 to anticipate large scale growth (Lawton, 1972) and the problems associated with its physical/spatial consequences (Hall, 1973).

Table 8.1 shows ranges of population projections for Britain up to 2001 which, on average, may mean an increase of some 10M in 30 years from 54.2M in 1969 to 64.4M in 2001. Absolute increases will occur everywhere, including the less fortunate regions with large areas of persistent depopulation (Figure 8.1), while certain regions centred on the axial belt will have increases well in excess of the national average (Figure 8.2): complex migration patterns (Figure 8.3) reveal that the pressure areas are also those subject to large scale movements. Such reasons led the Select Committee on Science and Technology (1971) to produce its study, 'Population of the United Kingdom': it doubted the practicality of an optimum figure for total population, but was concerned nationally about the interaction of any population increase on food supplies, resources, economic growth and pollution, and concluded that "the Government must act to prevent the consequence of population growth becoming intolerable for the every day conditions of life" (p.x).<sup>1</sup>

As a social planning tool, population policy is inseparable from economic and physical considerations. "The spatial structure partly reflects and partly determines the social structure. The sheer permanence of the

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<sup>1</sup>The Committee recommended national action (a) to co-ordinate and improve the study of the U.K. and world population trends and their consequences; (b) to study the interrelationships between population, major resource issues and the environment; (c) to appraise in the context of population policy the plans of government Departments for housing, water supplies, food, transport, fiscal policy, employment and other relevant matters; (d) to advise the Government on population policy; and (e) to publicise the implications of population levels.



Table 8.1 Britain: Regional population projections for 2001 (mid-1969 based)

Source: D.O.E. (1971)

| Region             | High Series | Standard Series | Low Series |
|--------------------|-------------|-----------------|------------|
| Northern           | 3.8         | 3.634           | 3.5        |
| Yorks & Humberside | 5.7         | 5.435           | 5.2        |
| North West         | 8.1         | 7.931           | 7.6        |
| East Midlands      | 4.7         | 4.472           | 4.4        |
| West Midlands      | 6.5         | 6.235           | 6.0        |
| East Anglia        | 2.4         | 2.261           | 2.1        |
| South East         | 21.2        | 20.762          | 20.0       |
| South West         | 5.0         | 4.714           | 4.6        |
| England            | -           | 55.445          | -          |
| Wales              | 3.2         | 3.096           | 2.8        |
| Scotland           | 6.3         | 5.891           | 5.6        |
| Great Britain      | -           | 64.431          | -          |

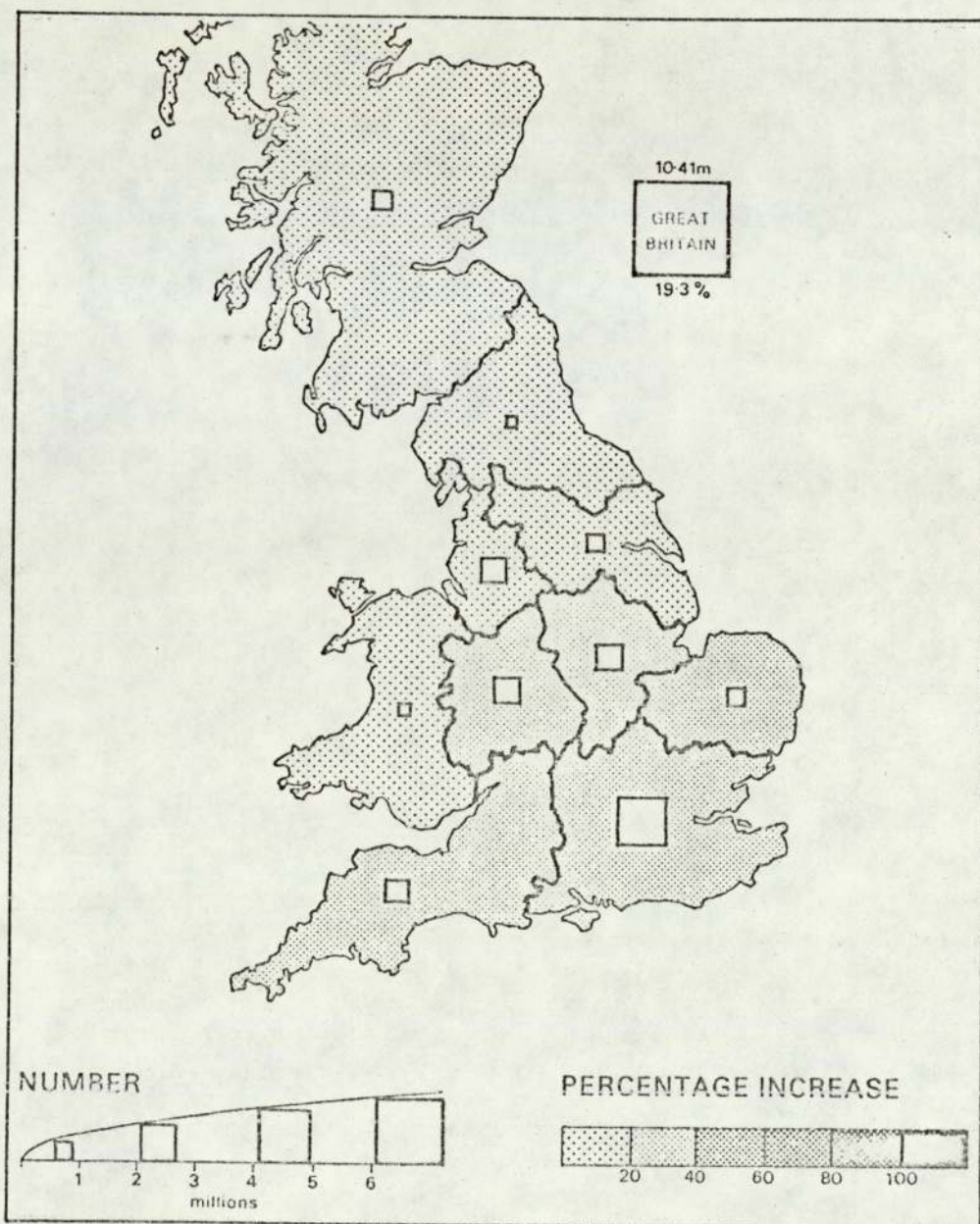


Figure 8.1 Britain: Projected population growth by regions, 1969-2001 - number and percentage

Source: D.O.E. (1971)



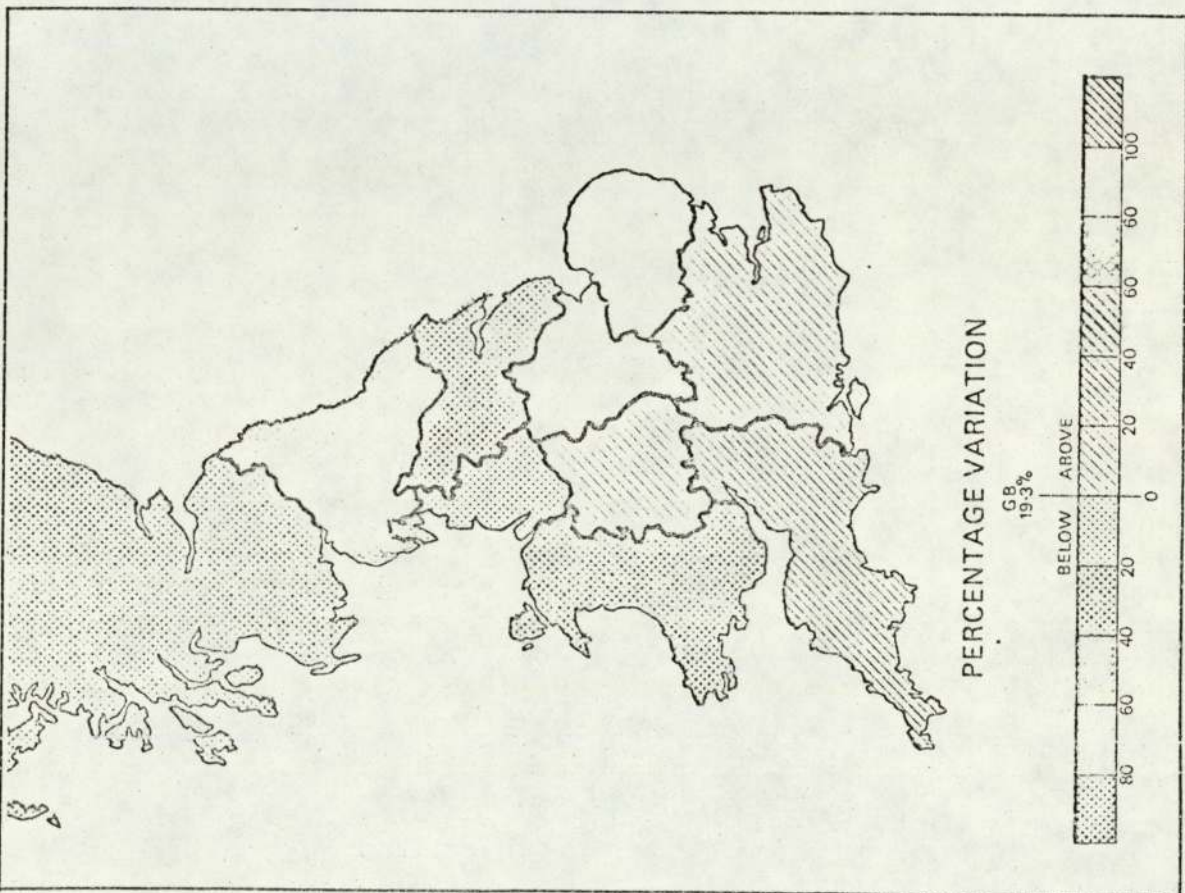


Figure 8.2 Britain: Projected population growth by regions, 1969-2001 - variation from national rate

Source: D.O.E. (1971)

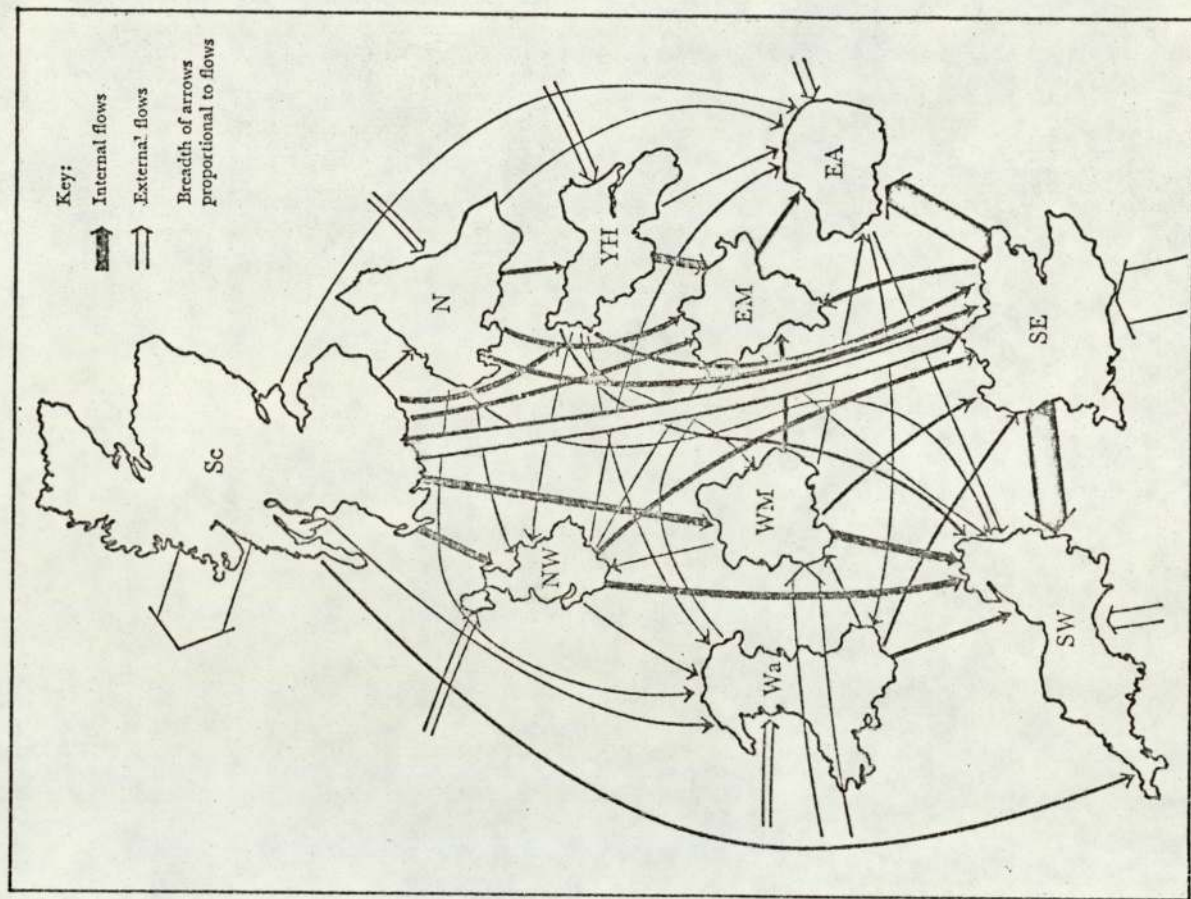


Figure 8.3 Britain: Net migration, 1961-1966

Source: Brown (1972)



built environment means ... at a later period of time when the values and structure of the distribution of economic rewards in the society have changed ... deprivation, in terms of desirable resources such as houses or access to facilities ... for certain sections of the population.<sup>1</sup> Town planning ... plays a crucial role in a mixed economy in redistributing spatial resources" (Pahl, 1968, pp.9-10).

In the study 'Long Term Population Distribution in Great Britain' (D.O.E., 1971), which sought to relate the question of population growth to national land planning strategy, the Government revealed an awareness of the need for a macro approach. The opportunity to affect the physical basis of national population growth is subject to three major constraints: (a) to 1981 mobile industry is unlikely to be available except in Development Areas and other areas of structural decline; (b) from 1981-2001 sufficient mobile industry should be available to new growth areas on a larger scale; and (c) social factors tend to militate against large scale, long distance population redistribution (para.5.38). But, whatever the constraints, population must be seen in terms of "the social objectives of planning ... man's work, play, housing, education, communication and government" (Brooke Taylor, 1963, p.48). These, at national scale, no less than at any other, will involve expression in the physical system and hence in macro town planning.

#### Leisure

Planning for population implies planning for leisure, the impact of which on Britain may well be greater than industrial urbanisation, the railways or motorised suburbia (Dower, 1965a). Certainly we need to plan nationally for "the pressure of an escalating demand for outdoor recreation on finite resources of land and water. In the long run other pressures may be more

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<sup>1</sup>Housing is a major challenge for planning policy (Cullingworth, 1960): about half Britain's housing stock (and other aspects of the urban fabric) need replacement/improvement before 2001 (D.O.E., 1971, paras.5.14-5.16).



critical, but few are as intimately involved with the potential quality of life in town and country" (Patmore, 1970, p.267) or more likely to demand attention of town planners (Figure 8.4). The ecological, scenic, economic, social and political aspects of leisure activities are now matters of national concern as the role of the Countryside Commission testifies. Demand on limited supplies of land require that the use of resources be both carefully planned and properly managed through recreation planning systems (Hookway, 1970). Nor is the problem merely one of simple supply and demand: it is also of propinquity and access due to the separation between concentrations of population and areas capable of meeting large scale needs (Figure 8.5).<sup>1</sup>

National recreational issues focus upon the countryside<sup>2</sup> - the "urban outdoors" and the remoter rural "resource land" (Patmore, 1970). The urban outdoors relates to the concept of living space developed by B. Cracknell (1967, p.153). This is "a relationship ... far more positive than is implied in the concept of the Green Belt [wherein the] surrounding countryside is now being used as an extension of life in the city ...". Beyond these living space zones, which cater for day to day requirements, the more remote rural resource land of countryside and coast provides for less immediate needs where interregional considerations become important (Figure 8.6). The problem is, then, not only of urban demand for rural supplies of recreational resources, but also of the competing requirements of 'people's playgrounds' ('informal' countryside, country parks, inland water) and 'conserving the heritage' (nature reserves, the National Trust, national parks, coastline, open country, areas of outstanding beauty, agriculture and forestry): each involves questions of resource capacity and

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<sup>1</sup>Although containing over one third of the population of England and Wales, South-East England's nearest national parks are the Peak District and the Brecon Beacons, each some 120 miles from central London.

<sup>2</sup>It "is not simply a reserve of land to meet the requirements of urban development" but it provides food, minerals and water; accommodates the national historic heritage; satisfies recreational needs; and gives a distinctive setting to urban settlements" (S.E.J.P.T., 1970a, para.10.19).



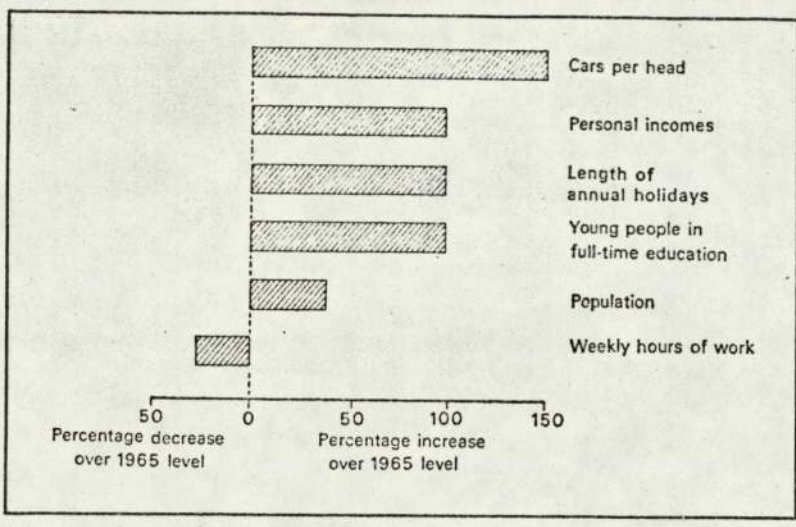


Figure 8.4 Estimated changes in factors affecting recreation, 1965-2000

Source: Patmore (1970)

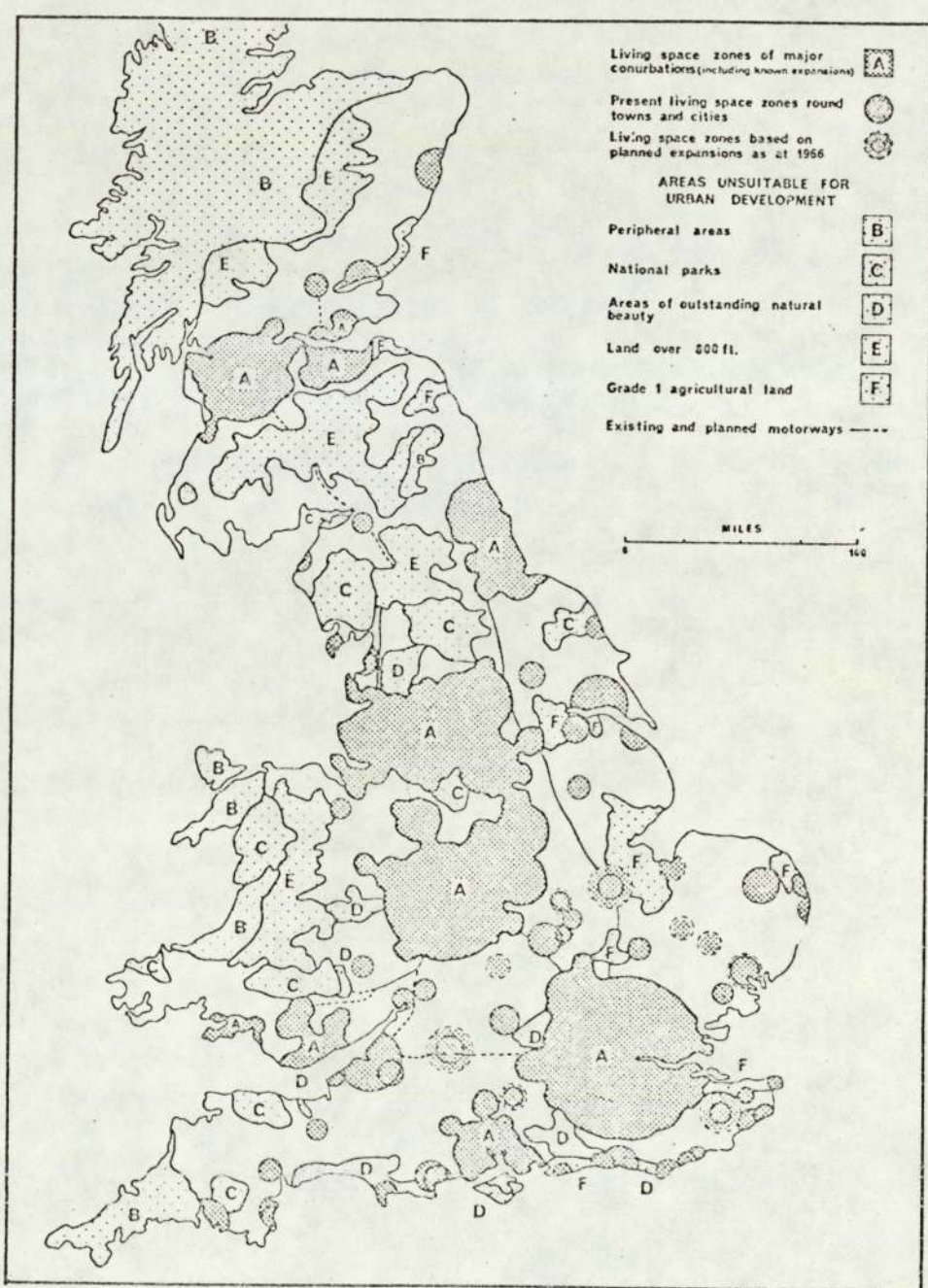


Figure 8.5 Britain: Factors affecting population distribution

Source: Cracknell (1967)



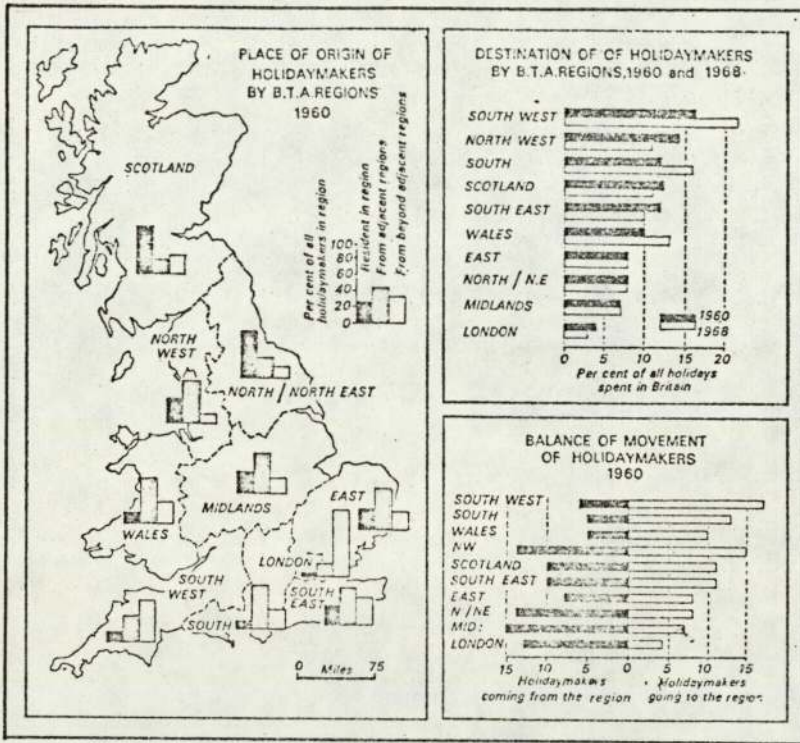


Figure 8.6 Britain: Inter-regional movements of holidaymakers, 1960 and 1968

Source: Patmore (1970)

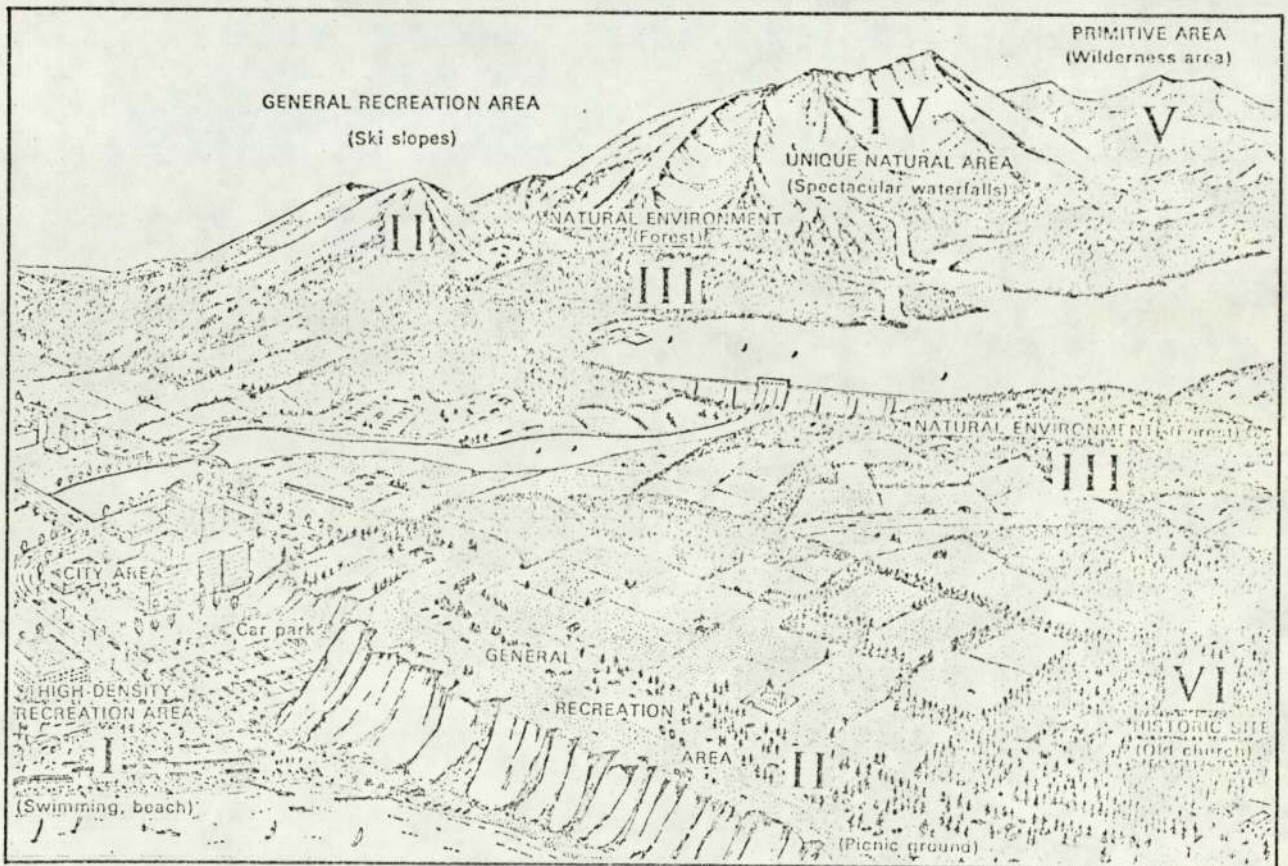


Figure 8.7 A national recreational system for the U.S.A.

Source: Patmore (1970)



of access through appropriate networks. And, in view of their relevance both aesthetically and in relation to the tourist economy, a positive national approach is needed with regard to many threatened historic towns (Smith, 1967).

A national policy should therefore aim to reconcile leisure requirements with resources available. Increasing social and physical mobility will place growing pressure on finite resources, requiring effective management and a hierarchy of facilities for filtering demand (Rodgers, 1970). Positive segregation and conservation policies to define recreation zones related to physical resource characteristics and public needs (Figure 8.7) will no doubt be necessary, perhaps through a three-fold rural heartland/country concentrations/metroparks policy (Patmore, 1970, pp.273-290). This should involve considering recreation in relation to alternative patterns of settlement and urban form and the accessibility to facilities which they offer<sup>1</sup> so that future population distribution may reflect both economic and social aspects of life.

#### B. THE ECONOMIC SYSTEM: 'WORK'

The concern of the economic system is "the use and allocation of resources", and, since resources are limited, there arise problems of "consumption, production and distribution" (Lean, 1966, p.45). National economic performance profoundly influences the quality of life (D.E.A., 1965, p.1), but although an economic development plan<sup>2</sup> is as important for effective social and physical planning as it is for economic policy per se, "there is no formula for predicting the future" (Lewis, 1966, p.25). Accordingly, economic planning is uncertain and short term (Lichfield, 1956; Lean and Goodall, 1966; Richardson, 1970), affecting and being affected by town

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<sup>1</sup>Cracknell (1967, pp.151-153) has attempted to assess the impact of urban form on accessibility by reference to the way in which it is facilitated in six alternative methods of expanding a city.

<sup>2</sup>Such a plan may take account of, inter alia, interdependence of economic activities, foreign trade, capital intensity, regional balance, unemployment, income distribution, public expenditure and inflation.



planning at all scales, without which, Buchanan (1972, p.67) suspects, Britain might be "stronger economically". Town planning and economic planning interact mainly at regional scale, above which there is no formal plan-making, and below which economic planning does not function as such. Regional planning is "an integral part of the steps ... to raise industrial efficiency [by] assessing regional needs and capacities in the light of the nation's ..." (Rodgers, 1966, pp.216-217) and it "should provide the environment for economic growth, because ... physical planning ... will not make sense unless it works within that framework" (Crossman, 1965, p.207).

### Employment

Britain's economic system as manifested in employment and the physical environment is reflected by the three-fold regional problem of the less prosperous/agricultural regions; less prosperous/industrialised regions; and more prosperous/congested regions.<sup>1</sup> Public policy response has been to assist economic growth in the less prosperous or peripheral regions<sup>2</sup> (Figure 8.8) and to restrain it in more prosperous areas: it involves raising growth rates in the former, while in the latter it means making "the best use of space to minimise the social and economic costs of congestion and preserve the amenity of the environment: some ... growth and expansion must be diverted to other centres" (McCrone, 1969, p.21). This approach may be questioned,<sup>3</sup> but intervention is likely to persist on the assumption that market forces are an unreliable basis for securing satisfactory locational

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<sup>1</sup>"Each industry has its distinctive set of locational characteristics [and] changes in the structure of an economy, therefore, inevitably feed through in to geographical pattern of employment opportunities" (Manners, 1972, p.2) giving rise to marked disparities between [and within] regions.

<sup>2</sup>The development and intermediate ('grey') areas. Problems arising from physical characteristics of development areas include transport costs, inaccessibility, cultural/social deprivation and remoteness from the metropolitan centre (N.E.D.C., 1963, pp.20-22).

<sup>3</sup>For example, I.D.C. policy can, in redressing regional disparity, cause other problems: indeed, "an imbalance in the industrial structure, both between the regions and within the regions, may be a necessary prerequisite for economic growth" (Lean, 1967, p.228).



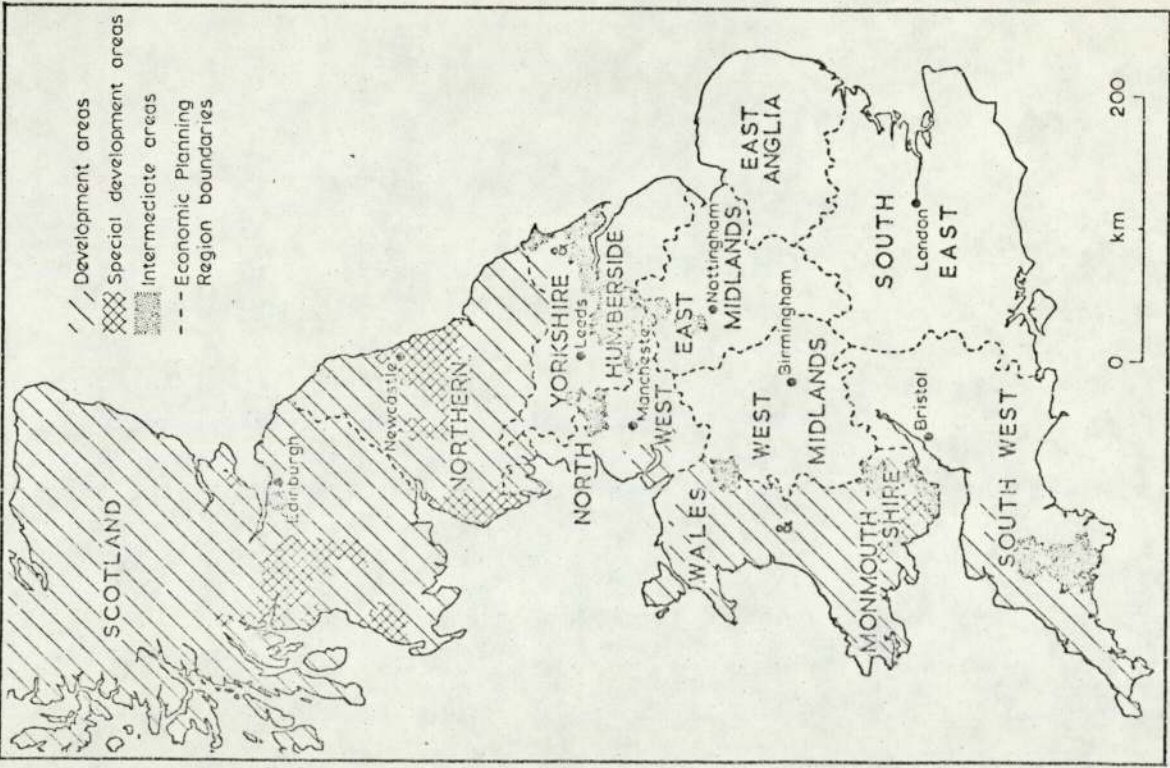


Figure 8.8 Britain: The assisted areas, 1971  
Source: Manners (1972)

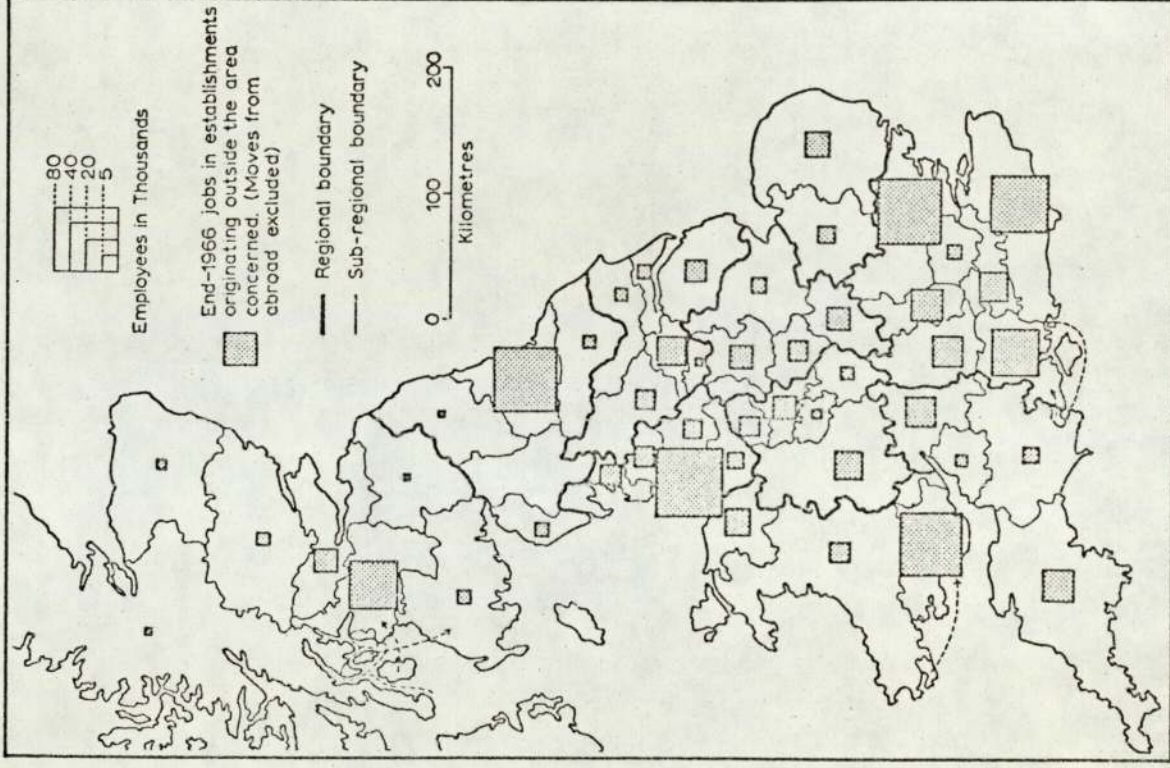


Figure 8.9 Britain: Spatial pattern of manufacturing movement, 1945-1965  
Source: Keeble (1971)

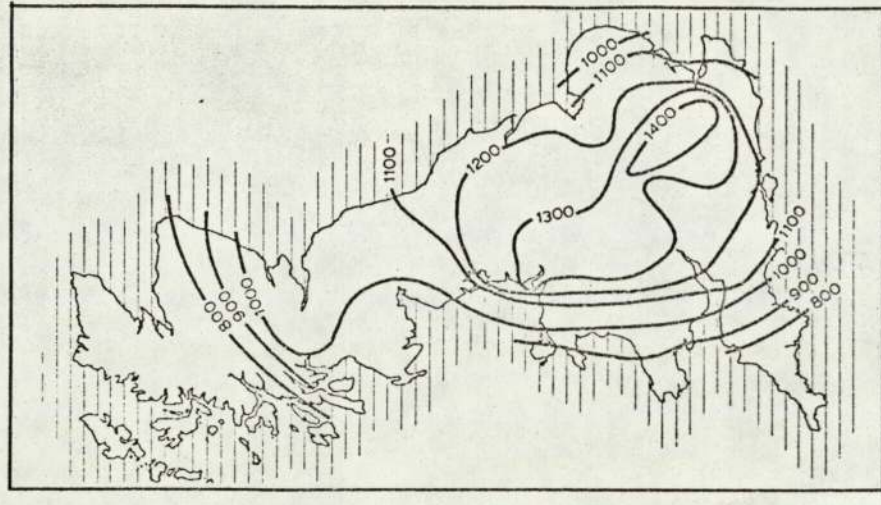


Figure 8.10 Britain: Indices of economic potential, c.1965  
Source: Clark (1966)



decisions and spatial distribution of opportunity.

Since economic activity occurs in spaces and places, town planning is interested in its implications for land use and development.<sup>1</sup> Location theory could contribute to a fuller understanding of how individual activities locate within broader spatial context, how economic activity is distributed in geographical space, and how growth, stagnation or decline occurs (McCrone, 1969, pp.31-50): indeed, economic techniques can "give to physical planners a greater sense of the economic underpinning and origins of physical change" (McLoughlin, 1965b, p.259). National physical planning should be concerned with this, so that location of new and best use of existing physical infrastructure may be given due consideration (Brown, 1972, p.342). Revival of depressed areas and provision for new growth hinge largely upon industrial mobility and its proper channelling. Here the Government has taken a definite role: for example, the 1972 White Paper 'Industrial and Regional Development' (Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, 1972) referred to a "new and comprehensive programme for industrial and regional regeneration ... to promote and sustain faster economic growth; to secure the expansion and modification of British industry; to attack the continuing and serious problems of regional imbalance; and to assist industry to meet the challenge of Europe" (para.1).<sup>2</sup>

Town planning has a clear part in some of the tasks set out in the White Paper such as "modernising the infrastructure and improving the environment" (para.7), but particularly it should ensure that "the process of industrial regeneration in a region and the overall planning of its land use and other physical resources are properly co-ordinated" (para.47). Growth areas are a case in point: the National Economic Development Council

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<sup>1</sup>Issues include market forces/location, regional policy/growth, regional balance/inflation, social capital and costs of concentration.

<sup>2</sup>These aims would be sought through 'traditional' regional economic policy.



(1963, pp.25-26) recognised the case for agglomeration,<sup>1</sup> and although at variance with the traditional British policy of diversification and dispersion, the growth pole concept suggests that locational disadvantages may not be endemic, but due to lack of external economies (McCrone, 1969, p.220). Structural/locational disadvantage may be primarily problems of economic planning (Brown, 1972, pp.147-175), but town planning could help by researching and proposing what macro physical patterning might best facilitate economic satisfaction.

Employment mobility is a key variable "both for an understanding of the changing spatial pattern of Britain's economy, and for national, regional and local planning" (Keeble, 1971, p.65). Regeneration of assisted areas and relief of congested ones depend upon new jobs to combat unemployment and provide work in new/expanded towns: manufacturing is basic, despite the important contributions of service industry and agriculture.<sup>2</sup> However, mobile manufacturing industry, as R. S. Howard (1968) has shown, is limited<sup>3</sup> and likely to remain so until the 1980s, while evidence suggests that the economic pull of the axial belt (Figures 8.9 and 8.10) may be "too powerful to allow for peripheral growth which is more than a reluctant tribute to government controls, or less than fundamentally dependent upon the dynamism of the economic heartland" (Keeble, 1972, p.66). Such is the essential, but unreliable economic basis for town planning action: nevertheless, if there is to be a right relationship between population and industry in terms

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<sup>1</sup> Concentration should facilitate development and growth by rendering both public expenditure on infrastructure and external economies more effective.

<sup>2</sup> Service employment (about 60% of national workforce) results from, rather than causes, population growth and, despite office developments, is not a primary source of jobs for assisted areas or large scale changes in settlement pattern. Employment in agriculture (3% of working population) does not reflect its importance as the producer of half our national food supplies, or in relation to rural settlement, services and conservation (Select Committee on Science and Technology, 1971, pp.56-59: Memorandum by the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food).

<sup>3</sup> Moves over 20 miles between 50 defined areas accounted for under 1M jobs, only  $\frac{1}{3}$  being inter-regional movement to peripheral areas, in a spatial pattern dominated by the London-Merseyside axis.



of location/distribution (absolute and relative) and the best use of economic and social capital (Brown, 1972, pp.319-320), national physical planning obviously has a role.

### Energy

Government action, or lack of it, with respect to energy resources has important implications for town planning and contrasts, paradoxically, with an apparently keen desire to guarantee water supplies. The Water Act 1945 was concerned with national policy for water and the Water Resources Board, established in 1963, seeks the national integration of resource development (Rees, 1972). In town planning terms, water supply is unlikely to be critical in relocating urban development (Jones, 1970), though the side effects of projects such as the Morecambe Bay and Dee barrages could be appreciable.

However, the question of power resources, equally significant for town planning, has been comparatively neglected: the promise of the 1965 White Paper on 'Fuel Policy' (Minister of Power, 1965) towards a cohesive approach did not materialise and not until the 1973 energy crisis led to the creation of a Department of Energy did the Government show urgency. Yet the White Paper stressed that "supplies of fuel and power are essential for the community [and] increasing quantities will be needed to support the growth of the economy and the rise in living standards". It further noted that "the fuel-producing industries are such that government is inevitably involved" and they have "a focal place in the planning of the economy, both national and regional" (para.3).

In the last decade, the energy industry moved from a two-fuel to a four-fuel base, adding nuclear power and natural gas to coal and oil (Figure 8.11). Protectionism is characteristic, aiming to foster security and stability of supply, cushion the world oil shortage and alleviate the social consequences of a declining coal industry (Robinson, 1969, pp.18-22). A 1967 White Paper accepted this as a policy basis, including more assistance



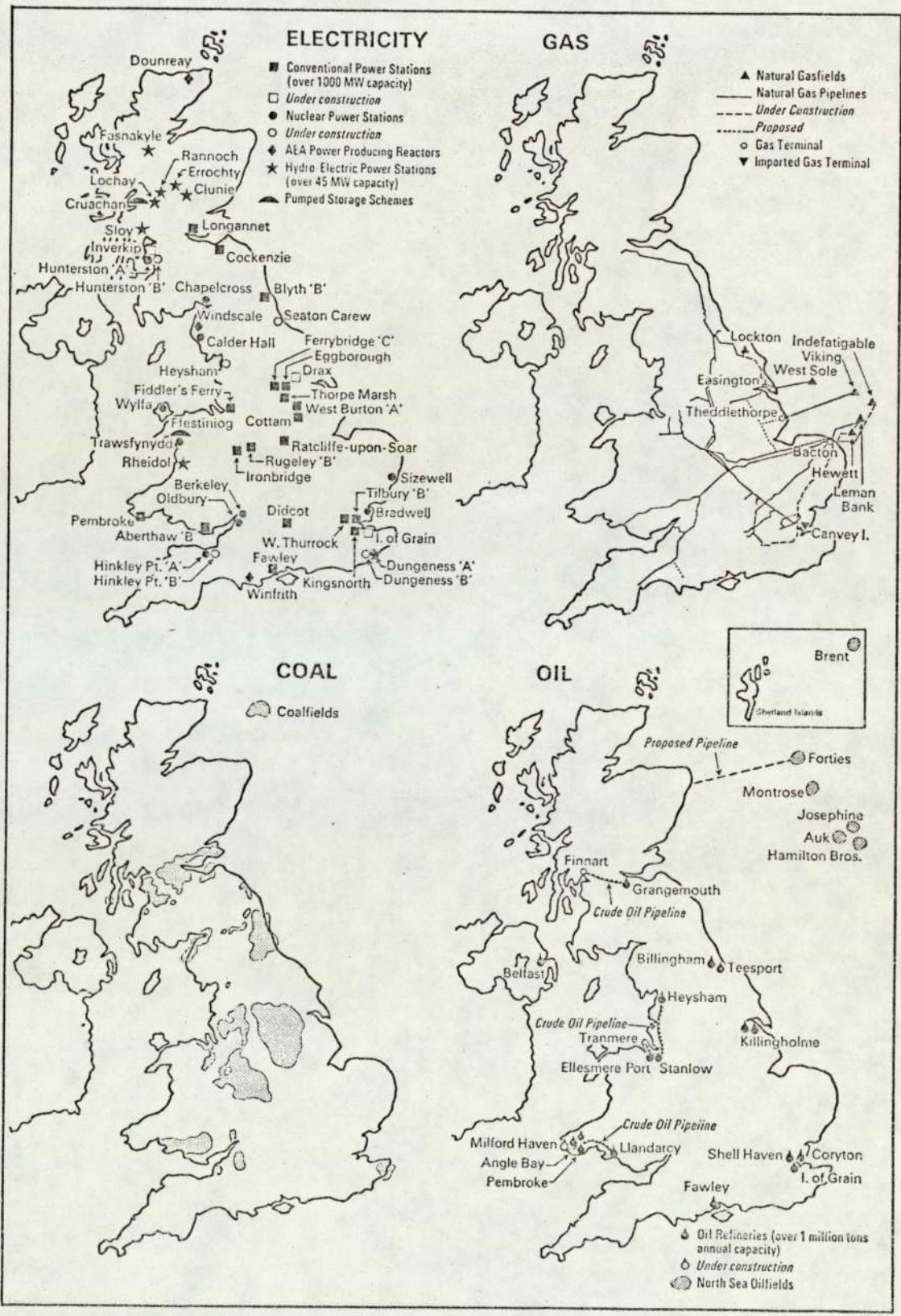


Figure 8.11 United Kingdom: Spatial pattern of energy resources  
 Source: Britain (1973)



to mining areas and protection for coal. From a town planning point of view, a greater coherence in national fuel policy could assist in locational decisions. While all forms of energy have reasonable flexibility, the geography of costs is a major constraint, as with large scale/long distance movement of coal (Figure 8.12).<sup>1</sup>

Town planners may see energy sources as potential growth points (e.g. Nigg Bay), but will need to know whether national fuel policy and technology justify such a view. Non-coal-based power has potential both in servicing the economy and in enabling the development of new growth areas which could provide stimulus for less fortunate regions and counter magnets to congested areas.<sup>2</sup> Natural gas and, subject to safety and water supply, nuclear power offer a flexible energy base, but are not growth industries per se: and while oil has growth potential, the wisdom of establishing large scale settlement related to estuarine petro-chemicals based on foreign supplies, or a remote Scottish new town on North Sea technology, are decisions which a national fuel policy should help to resolve. The merits of continued assistance to coal mining to minimise social distress and to maximise social capital resources are obvious and, as Manners (1971, p.178) emphasises, "the spatial dimension must be incorporated within models of the energy economy in order to improve forecasts ... upon which public policy must rest".

### C. THE PHYSICAL SYSTEM: 'PLACE'

Spatial strategies for physical development will be a function of the needs of and interaction between folk/work/place, or population/employment/land use: they will involve decisions concerning these as real resources and the

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<sup>1</sup> Inter-regional small scale distribution networks rather than inter-regional high load pipelines raise costs of gas; oil costs are more uniform; and electricity costs depend on location of power stations, fuel sources and texture of transmission network.

<sup>2</sup> Oil and gas, particularly, offer opportunities to counteract megalopolis.



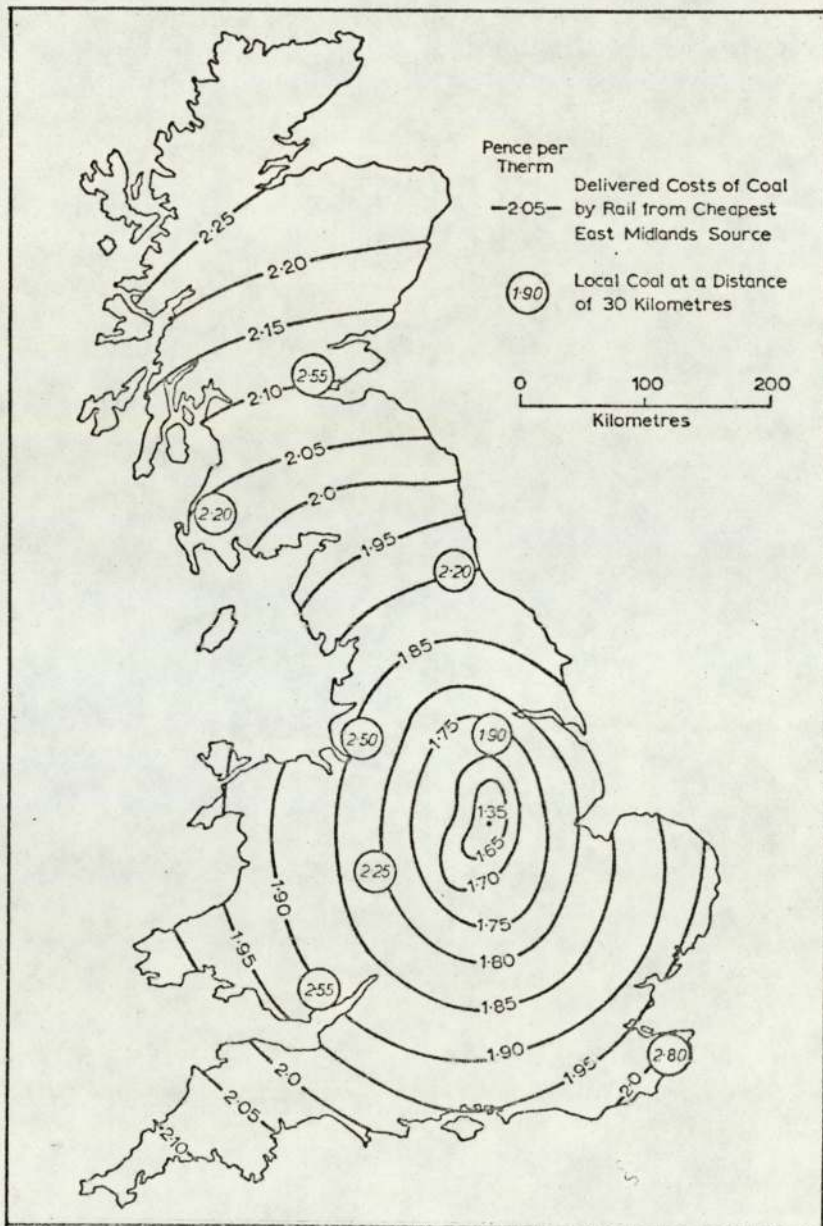


Figure 8.12 Britain: Estimated marginal delivered costs of coal, c.1970

Source: Manners (1971)



allocation of finance to their organisation.<sup>1</sup> F. J. McCulloch (1961, p.9) writes that "we failed to realise that the range of land use planning is co-extensive with the scale and coincident with the purposes of capital investment. The guidance of land use ... nationally and regionally requires the bringing together of the forces responsible for development [yet] no attempt was made to relate directly the exercise of planning powers to geographical and social areas suited to the problems to be solved". This criticism points to the role which town planning could play at national scale by assisting decisions upon the kind of physical infrastructure - or land use planning in terms of what? where? when? and how? - that will best satisfy national aspirations.

#### Land Use

Doubtless aware of the need for some kind of land planning framework at macro level, the Department of the Environment (1971) has "tried to provide a broad background for planning the future population distribution of Great Britain over the next three decades" (para.7.23). The Department noted, however, lack of knowledge about social and industrial constraints on location, and about costs/benefits of alternative means of accommodating population (para.5.40). The problem may be illustrated by hypothesising alternative physical consequences of population growth (Figure 8.13) and contemplating the basis on which decisions might be made (Burns, 1965). The town planner must evaluate, with 'corporate' assistance, not only what alternative settlement patterns would give greatest social satisfaction having regard to quality of life, but also what is feasible in terms of economic and transportation factors and of resources of land and finance (Longworth, 1966). It would be easy to agree "that the social structure is the key to the spatial structure and that until we understand how a given socio-economic system places people with regard to fundamental scarce resources ... we are

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<sup>1</sup>For an overview see Select Committee on Science and Technology (1971, pp.83-88: Memorandum by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government).




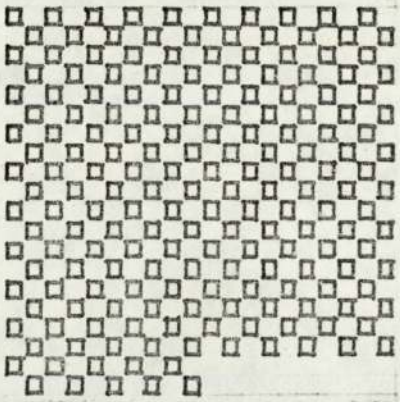

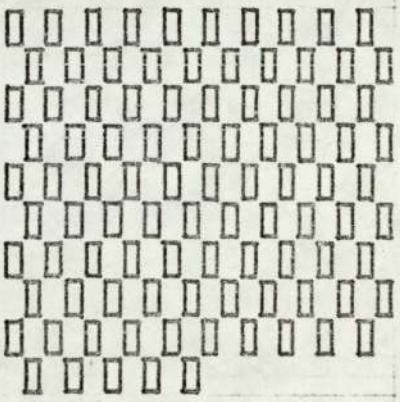

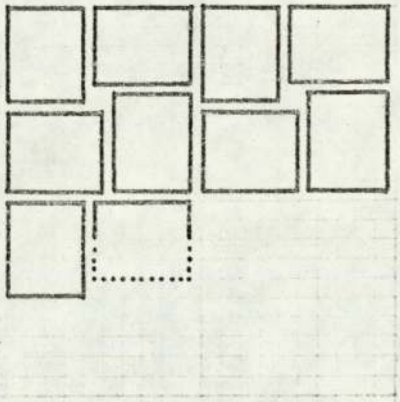
| Method of accommodation  | Additional population to be accommodated  |                       |
|--|---|-----------------------|
|  | Natural growth 9.5M   | Natural+overspill 14M |
| New towns of 50,000<br>         | 190<br>    | 280<br><br>□ X 280    |
| Small cities of 100,000<br>    | 95<br>    | 140<br><br>□ X 140    |
| Conurbations of 1,000,000<br> | 9-10<br> | 14<br><br>□ X 14      |

Figure 8.13 England and Wales: Possible physical consequences of population growth, 1965-2000

Source: original, based on Burns (1965)



unable to make predictions about future spatial structure" (Pahl, 1968, p.14). But, rather than take a negative stance, we adopt Burns view that some effort is better than none: as we have seen in Chapter 7 there is some basis for proceeding by, for example, the use of identifiable aspects of environment as proxy for their less tangible socio-economic functions (March, 1969; Armen, 1972).

Present trends indicate increasing social and physical mobility (Willmott, 1970) and, "the job of the land use planner, then, is to multiply access to all sorts of opportunity within his planning region" (Hall, 1972, p.179): this involves difficult decisions in trying to anticipate the necessary physical provision for the community's aspirations in respect of family, home, mobility, education, living standards, life styles and leisure. And "since any major planned expansion scheme represents a very considerable concentration of resources, decisions on a possible national strategy [should reflect] the relative costs and benefits, not only of alternative locations or alternative scales of growth but also of developing new large sites as against expanding existing major urban areas" (D.O.E., 1971, para.7.9). However, socio-economic and physical constraints, together with the potential of existing urban form for adaptation, suggest that up to 2001 the broad settlement pattern will remain substantially unaltered, and that growth will fall largely on established centres and short range overspill, supplemented if necessary by new major growth areas such as Humberside, Severnside, South Hampshire and Tayside.<sup>1</sup>

Offering a practicable physical response to socio-economic needs, "the great areas of opportunity today are what we are coming to recognise as city regions. In effect, these are social environments [and] the city

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<sup>1</sup>Burns (1965, pp.37-39) suggests new towns, city regions, development axes and string-settlements. From 1949-1969 new/expanded towns accommodated about 850,000 persons (4% of national housing construction).



region<sup>1</sup> is a structure which has perpetuated many of the traditional qualities of the city, but has impregnated these into a regional environment, with all its mobilities" (Ash, 1966, pp.97-98). It was recognised by the Maud Commission (1969, para.115) that complex interactions between employment, housing, shopping, business, education, welfare services, recreational facilities, and the resultant land use and movement pressures may be handled to great effect on a city region basis and it is arguable that "we should, on the national plans, press for ... a relatively even distribution of population ... to make possible the development city regions balanced in terms of employment, occupation and class" (Brooke Taylor, 1963, p.55). The city region concept offers scope for the balanced development of rural and conurban regions. R. J. Green (1971, p.85) suggests that in the rural regions (Figure 8.14), "the primary objective ... is to secure changes in the pattern of settlement that will increase the range of ... opportunities, and make them available to a greater proportion of the resident population". If so, then perhaps as a matter of national policy, some of the blanks on the city regional map (Figure 8.15) should be filled in, and perhaps, also as a matter of national policy, guidance on urban form options and their macro, inter-regional relationships is needed (Figure 8.16).

In this discussion we have not sought to project the city region as the best answer (though it may be so) in a national approach to physical patterning, but to indicate some of the questions to which central government might be addressing itself. Thus, whether it be based on city regional strategy (Self, 1966) or any other concepts, some kind of indicative framework seems necessary to relate population growth/redistribution and activities to their physical context (taking account of, inter alia, regional development

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<sup>1</sup>It comprises "groups of towns standing in a hierarchical relationship to one or more major urban centres, the whole exhibiting a complex system of economic and social links ... characterised by a wide geographical spread of activities [and retaining] the general advantages associated with large populations ... while mitigating some of the disadvantages experienced with more densely populated urban areas" (D.O.E., 1971, para.7.19).







needs, central place functions, recreational demands and transport networks) and to state and promote the preferred option(s). It would be interesting to know, for instance, the extent to which the developmental patterns revealed in Table 3.2 were strategically planned or fortuitously evolved. These are surely appropriate considerations for an indicative national physical plan, and we envisage that they should be approached along the lines developed by the South East Joint Planning Team (1970b, pp.74-97) where the regional significance of urban form<sup>1</sup> was examined in relation to various spatial concepts<sup>2</sup> and planning issues.<sup>3</sup>

Despite the importance of urban form and resources to socio-economic satisfaction, there is little understanding of the relative merits of alternatives as a basis for a national settlement policy (Brown, 1966; James, 1967; McConnell, 1967). The physical consequences of growth require balance between the socially desirable and the economically viable, including the need for an 'order of magnitude' size for settlements to give the most efficient arrangement of land uses and access space (Lean, 1966a, 1966b). Similarly, Stone (1967) recognises that locational suitability for urbanisation is constrained by physical features, by industrial location economics and by people's willingness to move. Location/urban form will affect the costs of physical development and of operating it, the values offered by the settlements, and the costs of inter-urban relationships.<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, Stone suggests criteria for the generation and evaluation of alternative regional urban forms (Table 8.2) and postulates that "there will

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<sup>1</sup>Accommodating substantial growth poses four key issues: regional flexibility; spatial/implementational needs of growth areas of different size; structure of urban areas; and costs/benefits of various growth forms.

<sup>2</sup>Physical elements of land use and communications are considered in terms of three basic forms: concentric, linear and grid.

<sup>3</sup>Main issues are defined as flexibility and the planning process; transport, accessibility and spatial relationships; central places and nodes of activities; the living area; and open space.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Cracknell (1967), Armen (1972).



Table 8.2 Urban form and resources: A regional evaluation matrix

Source: based on Stone (1967)

| Range of alternative regional forms |   | Conditioning factors |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|----------------------|---|---|------------|---|---|---------------|---|---|
|                                     |   | Physical             |   |   | Industrial |   |   | Psychological |   |   |
| Component                           | Spatial element   | A                    | B | C | A          | B | C | A             | B | C |
| 1. Settlement hierarchy             | a) Village/ neighbourhood   |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
|                                     | b) Small town   |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
|                                     | c) Large town   |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
|                                     | d) Small city   |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
|                                     | e) Large city   |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
|                                     | f) Metropolitan city  |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
| 2. Density                          | a) Low  |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
|                                     | b) Medium-low   |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
|                                     | c) Medium-high  |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
|                                     | d) High   |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
| 3. Land use                         | a) Zoned<br>i) centralised<br>ii) dispersed                               |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
|                                     | b) Integrated   |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
| 4. Shape                            | a) Circular   |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
|                                     | b) Star/finger  |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
|                                     | c) Linear   |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
| 5. Communications                   | a) Private  |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
|                                     | b) Public   |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
|                                     | c) Private/public   |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
| 6. Construction phasing             | a) Stability  |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
|                                     | b) Growth<br>i) Slow<br>ii) Rapid   |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
|                                     | a) New development  |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |
| 7. Settlement origin                | b) Existing development<br>i) Isolated<br>ii) Cluster<br>iii) Conurbation |                      |   |   |            |   |   |               |   |   |

Conditioning FactorsPhysical

- A plain  
B valley  
C hill

Industrial

- A raw materials  
B markets  
C communications

Psychological

- A urbanity  
B amenity  
C access



be some regional distribution of development which provides the best value for money" (p.95). Information is needed to enable a full consideration of whether urban development should be more evenly dispersed or concentrated in particular regions, and also of whether some forms are especially suitable for various locations and purposes, and whether there is any optimum pattern.

Such considerations should materially assist national scale decision making in relation to, say, growth pole and urbanisation policy. Size is a critical, but imperfectly understood, variable: for example, it has been suggested that a city of 100,000 - 200,000 might offer its region a full range of commercial services, but that 200,000 - 500,000 would be needed for the full development of manufacturing, while on the basis of various other criteria, optimum sizes could differ considerably.<sup>1</sup> Nor must we let our concern for urbanisation and economic efficiency obscure the need for macro physical planning equally to safeguard the national heritage and amenities, as in the conflict between large scale urban growth and conservation or between the structures of oil/gas technology and the protection of countryside and coast.

But understanding is imperfect and often, as R. S. McConnell (1967, p.131) observes, "in the absence of a physical plan, proposals for major new settlements have to be based on the existing communications structure of roads and railways: thus an outdated pattern is perpetuated [yet] planners could try to re-structure the country's communications systems so as to divert growth to new areas". The situations which evoke this kind of criticism, we suggest, could well be averted, and the issues which we have been outlining tackled, through macro physical planning and an indicative national physical plan.

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<sup>1</sup>For an overview, including approaches by C. Clark, K. S. Lomax and G. M. Neutze, see McCrone (1969, pp.41-47).



## Transportation

In transportation, the central approach has been fairly clear-cut but, until the mid 1960s, unco-ordinated both inter-modally and with the land use/activity patterns which it facilitates (Burns, 1963). 'The National Plan' made passing reference to road, rail, sea, air and other forms of communication, but the 1966 White Paper 'Transport Policy' (Ministry of Transport, 1966) was the first notable move<sup>1</sup> towards an integrated transport policy. Furthermore, in its recognition that "the main transport system - the railways, the inter-urban road network, the ports and airports - must be planned centrally and investment must be co-ordinated" (para.71) and that "road planning is an essential part of physical and economic planning" (para.37), it underlined the importance of transcending sectoral attitudes. This theme is also taken up by the 1972 White Paper on 'Industrial and Regional Development' (S.S.T.I., 1972, paras.56-58): "efficient and speedy communications will be a key element for competitive success of British industry" in the E.E.C. and would require investment in ports giving access to Europe, "a network of motorways or other modern high-speed roads linking all main industrial areas [providing] comprehensive improved access routes from the network to all the major ports", accelerated improvement of roads to the Thames and Humber port complexes, and improved road access from the industrial centres of the East and West Midland regions, Scotland and South Wales, particularly to the east coast ports.

This reciprocates the proposals contained in the 1970 White Paper 'Roads for the Future: the New Inter-Urban Plan for England' (M.O.T., 1970), for a "primary strategic road network" (para.12) which purports to take account not only of economic development (paras.18-20) but also of environment and amenity considerations (paras.21-22). These proposals were related to, inter alia, the effect of planned changes in settlement pattern and

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<sup>1</sup> Followed in 1967 by White Papers on railways, freight, public transport and waterways.



employment:<sup>1</sup> in fact, with other main elements of Britain's communications system (Figure 8.17), they serve to emphasise the axial belt (where the M1-M6 forms the 'high street' of Megalopolis England parallelling under-used railways), doing little to spread development and counteract regional disparities (Patmore, 1972, p.58). However, despite the view of the 1966 White Paper that "the overall transport plan should reflect the needs of the individual regions [and their] planning objectives" (M.O.T., 1966, para.71), Professor A. Goss (1969, p.258) finds it "difficult to see from the report of the Humberside Feasibility Study ... how these strategic routes can serve several possible alternative strategies for major development [and asks] by the same token, where are the major developments in East Anglia to justify the apparently favoured position for new strategy routes? If the justification is farther back along the route ... then surely there is also a basis implied in these routes for further new and expanded towns in East Anglia?"

While the 1966 White Paper saw the main task in relation to roads as the provision of effective inter-and intra-urban networks,<sup>2</sup> it sought a railway "system of shape and size to meet commercial and social needs" hinging upon a major trunk network "linking the main centres of population, industry and commerce" with secondary and specialised networks (M.O.T., 1966, para.19). These proposals owed much to the Beeching Report (British Railways Board, 1963) which assumed that the national distribution of population and industry would not change significantly. From a national town planning point of view the railways' unique characteristic - "the high cost of their specialised and exclusive route system, and their low cost per unit moved if traffic is carried in dense flows of well-loaded through trains" (p.57) must be appreciated. Thus, rail routes should either serve existing concentration

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<sup>1</sup>For a summary of transport issues see Select Committee on Science and Technology (1971, pp.141-142: Memorandum by the Ministry of Transport).

<sup>2</sup>Cf. the Buchanan Report (M.O.T., 1963) which had major national impact.



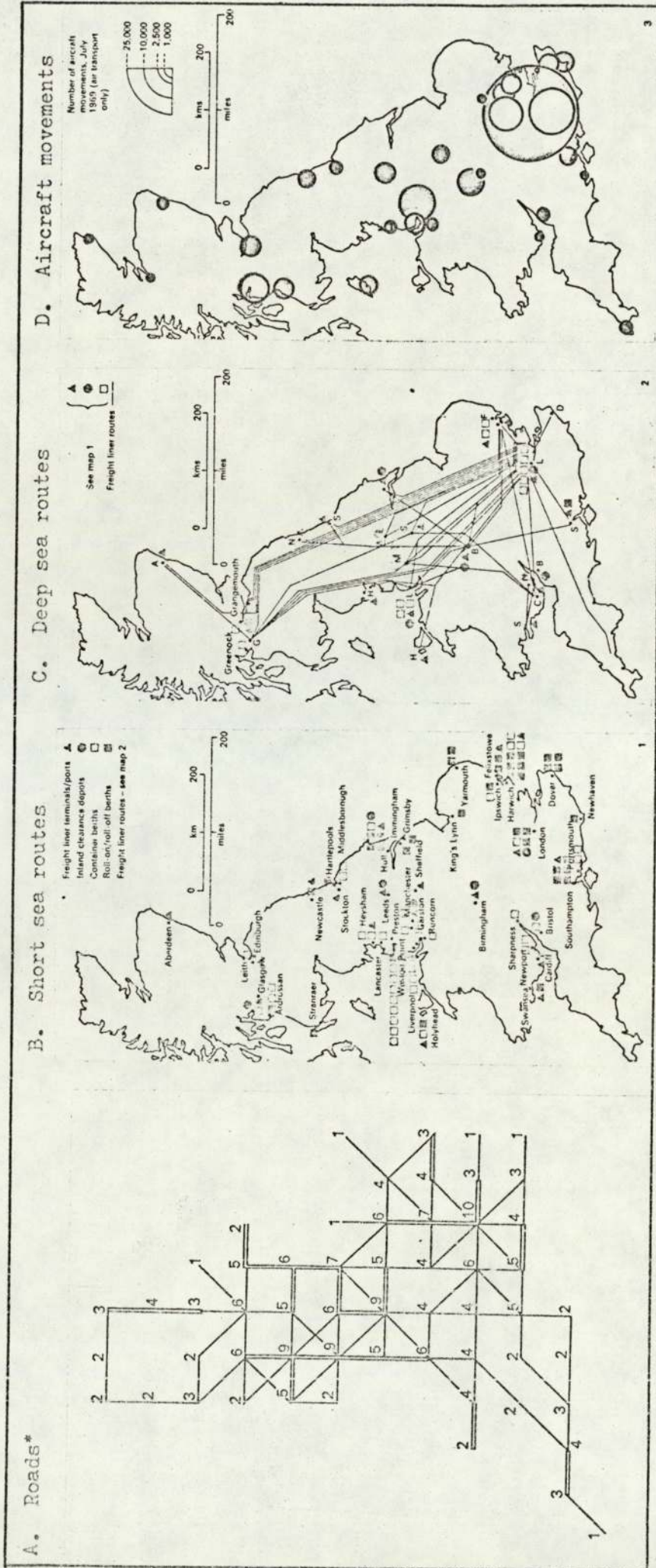


Figure 8.17 Britain: Spatial pattern of major communications systems  
 Source: March (1969), Sealy (1972)

\*Strategic routes for England and Wales showing connectivity of 50 x 50 km cells.



of population/industry or else new developments should be so located as to take up spare capacity in the system or be large enough to justify the creation of such a facility.

Mention has been made of the significance of the Rochdale Report, following which the National Ports Council (1965) proposed major works at London, Liverpool, Bristol, Hull and Southampton and significant developments at nine other ports. In particular, deep water container traffic demands specialist facilities and well integrated road/rail links to centres of population and industry. While both ports and airports possess growth area potential, the latter present particular environmental problems of pollution, noise and supporting infrastructure: nor, as the Edwards Committee (1969) on Civil Air Transport and the third London airport (Roskill Commission, 1971) deliberations indicate, does a national policy seem to be emergent.

Although land use and transportation have, for convenience, been dealt with under separate headings, we regard them as integrated components of the physical system: equally the physical system cannot be dissociated from its socio-economic *raison d'être*. In this chapter we have tried to show, from the macro standpoint, how this system interacts with and functions as a facilitator of the social and economic systems and their objectives. We see the physical system, not as an end, but as a powerful means which can do much to make or mar human activities and interactions. Because of this, and because it is both an invaluable real resource in itself and a large consumer of financial resources, it deserves our fullest attention. And, because of the interdependent nature of the spatial scales of physical planning, the macro scale must be recognised as part of an integrated town planning model and as a significant factor in national budgeting.

In these circumstances we subscribe to the view of the Department of the Environment (1971, para.7.21) that "more definitive regional strategies will need to be developed [and that] the ultimate aim should be to cover the whole country in this way". But this amounts to a piecemeal national approach



and, as such, it must inevitably require national direction and co-ordination. We therefore go further than the Department and suggest that 'place' at national scale per se requires specific and comprehensive treatment by central government both in its own right as an important conditioner of the quality of life and because town planning has often, through default, to act as a surrogate for social and economic planning. Stated simply, the decision lies between plan or non-plan; between structured strategy or fortuitous form; between an indicative national physical plan or disjointed incrementalism. In the next two chapters we examine, through representative examples, various approaches to national physical planning, and put forward suggestions in respect of a macro planning model for Britain.



NATIONAL PHYSICAL PLANNING APPROACHES: SOME COMPARATIVE EXAMPLES

In this chapter we seek to support the idea of an indicative national physical plan for Britain by reference to a representative range of case studies. Examples and experiments at home (Section A) and abroad (Section B) are instructive and we therefore consider approaches to the theory and practice of national physical planning in widely different situations.

A. BRITISH EXAMPLES

Our home examples fall into three groups. It is first worth referring briefly to 'visionary' models which have responded to problems that exist, have become more serious and require solution at national level and at national scale. We then consider ways in which the need for national physical planning has been revealed - it cannot be said that the problem has been tackled - through an examination of 'centre' and 'periphery' models, basing our studies on central government and the West Midlands region respectively.

'Visionary' models

A number of visionary, innovative attempts have been made to formulate a physical structure or framework for Britain as a whole. These include the concept of "a National plan incorporating motorways, urban regions and recreational areas" (Figure 9.1), as the first of four levels for planning in Britain, put forward by Josephine P. Reynolds (1965, p.180); the idea by D. Rigby Childs (1962) of a physical framework (Figure 9.2), related to a European context (Figure 9.3), for combating congestion in the metropolitan region through "a major long-range dispersal programme as the main strategy" which recognised that a national "solution can only be found when the needs of each principal region are seen in balance" (p.219); and an Architectural Association exercise (Gregory et al, 1967, p.477) which examined "the effect of a comprehensive national plan for settlement, industry and communications" (Figure 9.4) on different sub-national situations.



new city groups  
 new urban groups  
 existing conurbations  
 Euroway routes  
 branches from Euroway

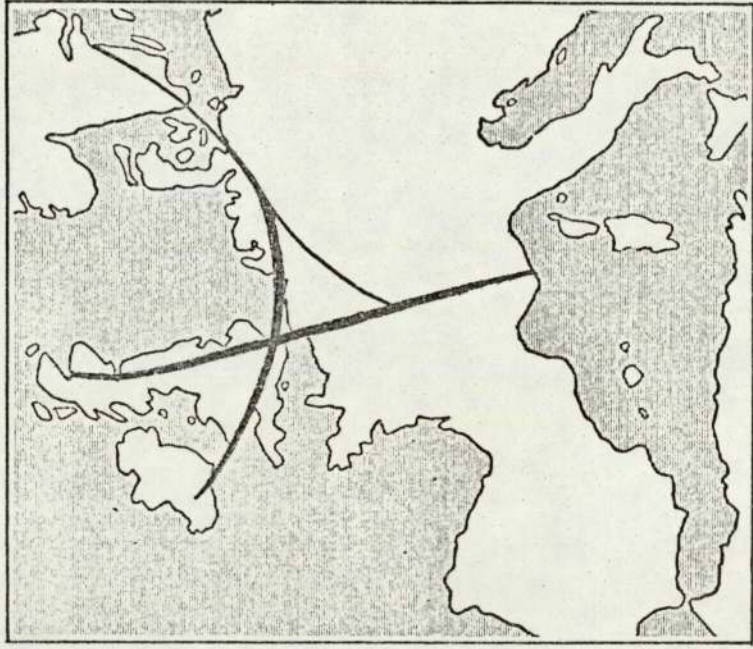


Figure 9.3 Europe: An international highway system  
 Source: Childs (1962)

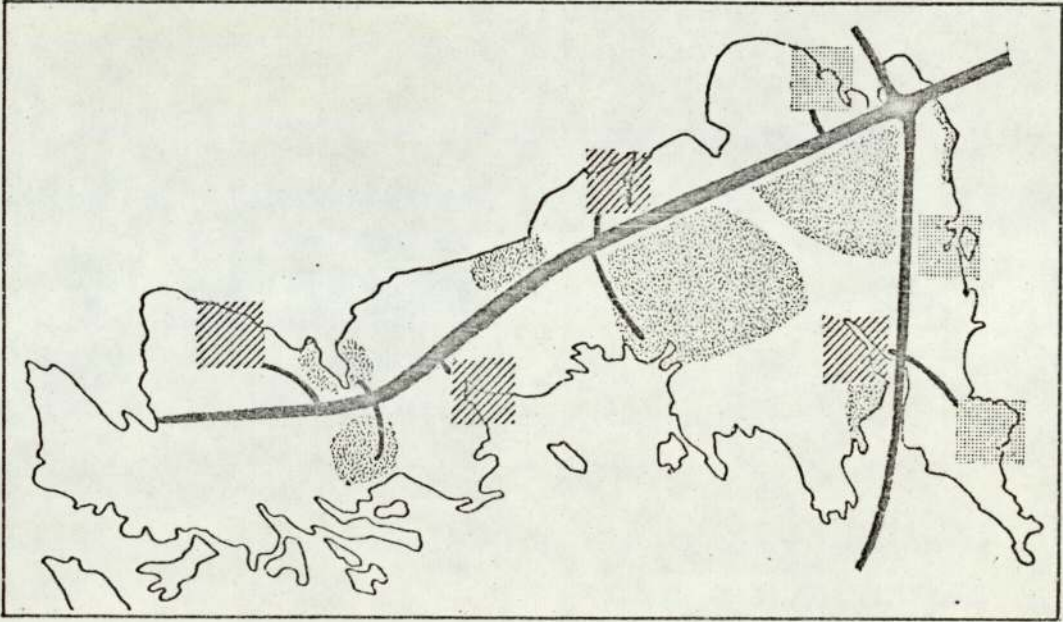


Figure 9.2 Britain: A 'counterdrift' plan  
 Source: Childs (1962)

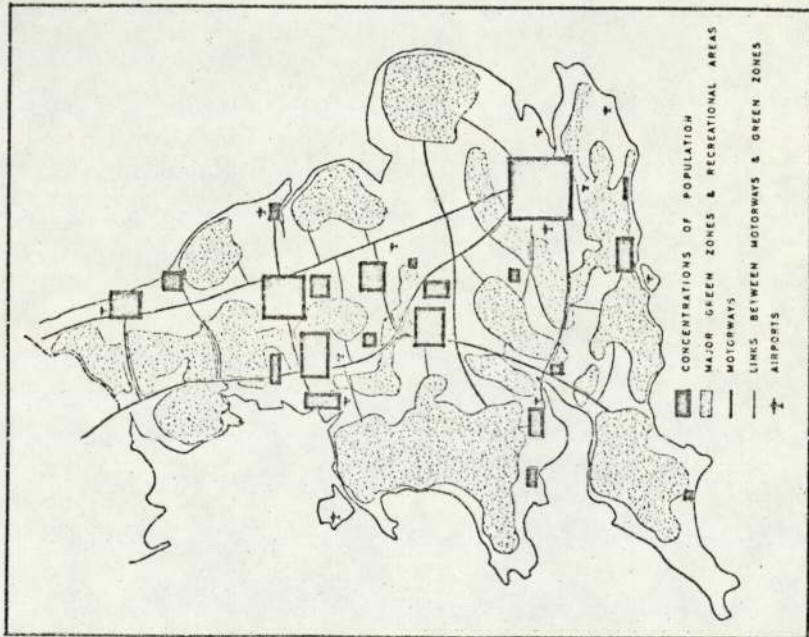


Figure 9.1 England and Wales: A national 'diagram'  
 Source: Reynolds (1965)



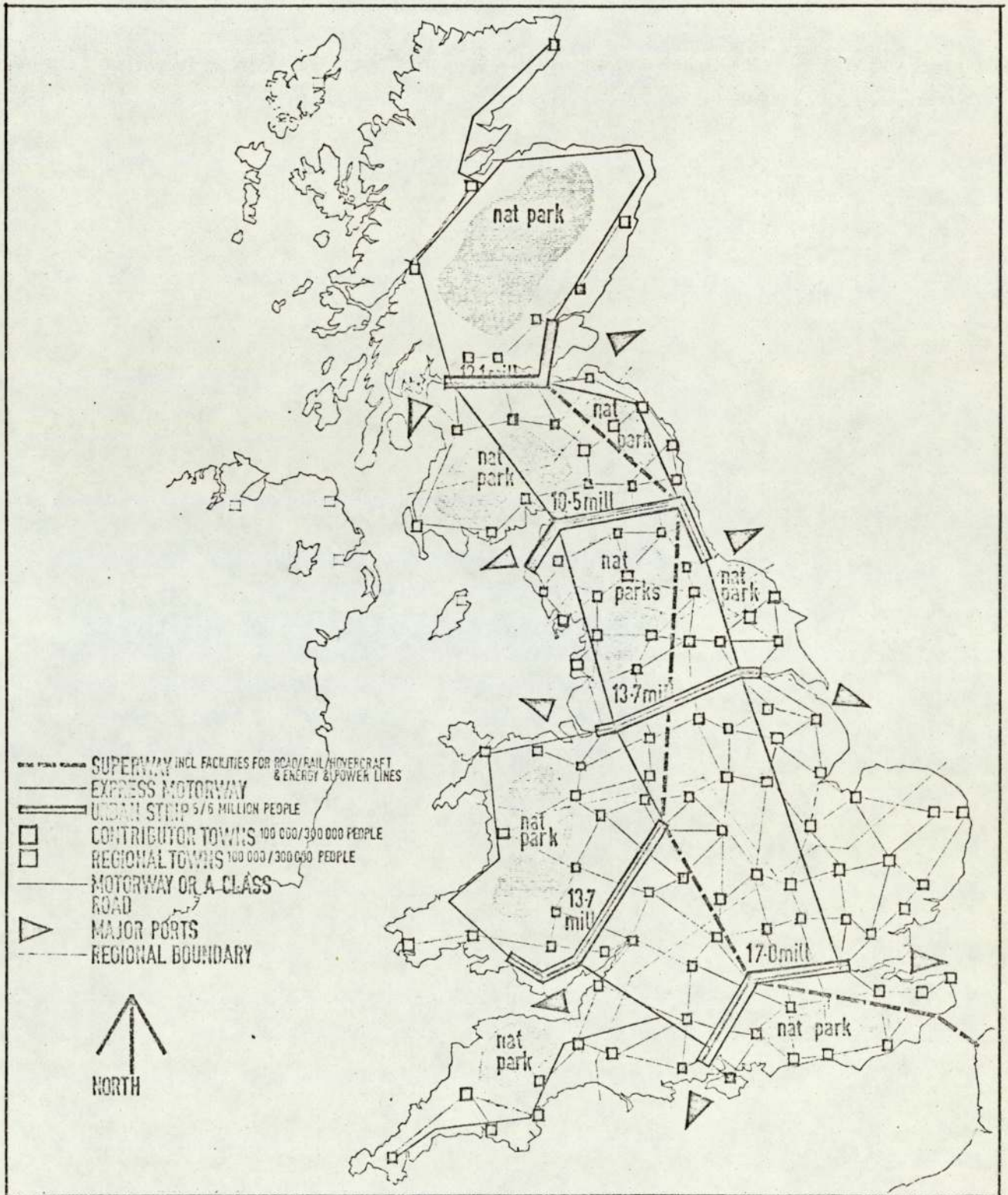


Figure 9.4 Britain: National plan for settlement and communications  
A.D. 2000

Source: Gregory et al (1967)



We concentrate, however, on a thoughtful paper, 'A Plan for Britain', wherein H. Rau (1965) presented "an hypothesis for a National Physical Plan, a broad strategy for the location of developments" within the framework of which "the detailed plans already prepared (e.g. for railways, ports, coal, power generation and distribution) can properly be studied and understood in relation to the whole" (p.195). This plan would recognise the interdependence of quantitative economic and qualitative physical factors, emphasising land as a platform for human activities: public policies might relate to infrastructure for a healthy economy, land requirements for population growth, environmental improvement and recreation, redress of regional disparities and conservation of resources. "These problems cannot be overcome by piecemeal action, nor by being tackled from one point of view alone ... nor by putting short-term expediency before long-term policies. A national strategy for the use of land, embracing all relevant points of view and all major problems, is clearly and urgently necessary, a strategy, moreover, which is fully conscious of fundamental and unalterable geographical facts" (p.195). Rau's design solution was a string settlement pattern for Britain (Figure 9.5) which makes interesting comparison with ideas for the urban structuring of the central core (Figure 9.6) contained in the Northampton, Bedford and North Bucks Study (McConnell, 1967).

These approaches appeared in the 1960s at a time when official quarters were becoming conscious of the general lack of, and need for, strategic direction at macro scale. While it would be idle to pretend that they exerted much influence, they were symptomatic of the period, reviving some of the national comprehensive spirit of the 1940s and foreshadowing Government interest in such potentially key elements in a national strategy as the London-Solent axis; the Channel Tunnel; Maplin; and the Severnside, Humber side and Tayside major growth areas. They go some way towards what we have in mind in terms of the kind of macro strategy needed to provide comprehensive guidance on major national physical/spatial issues (Chapter 8).



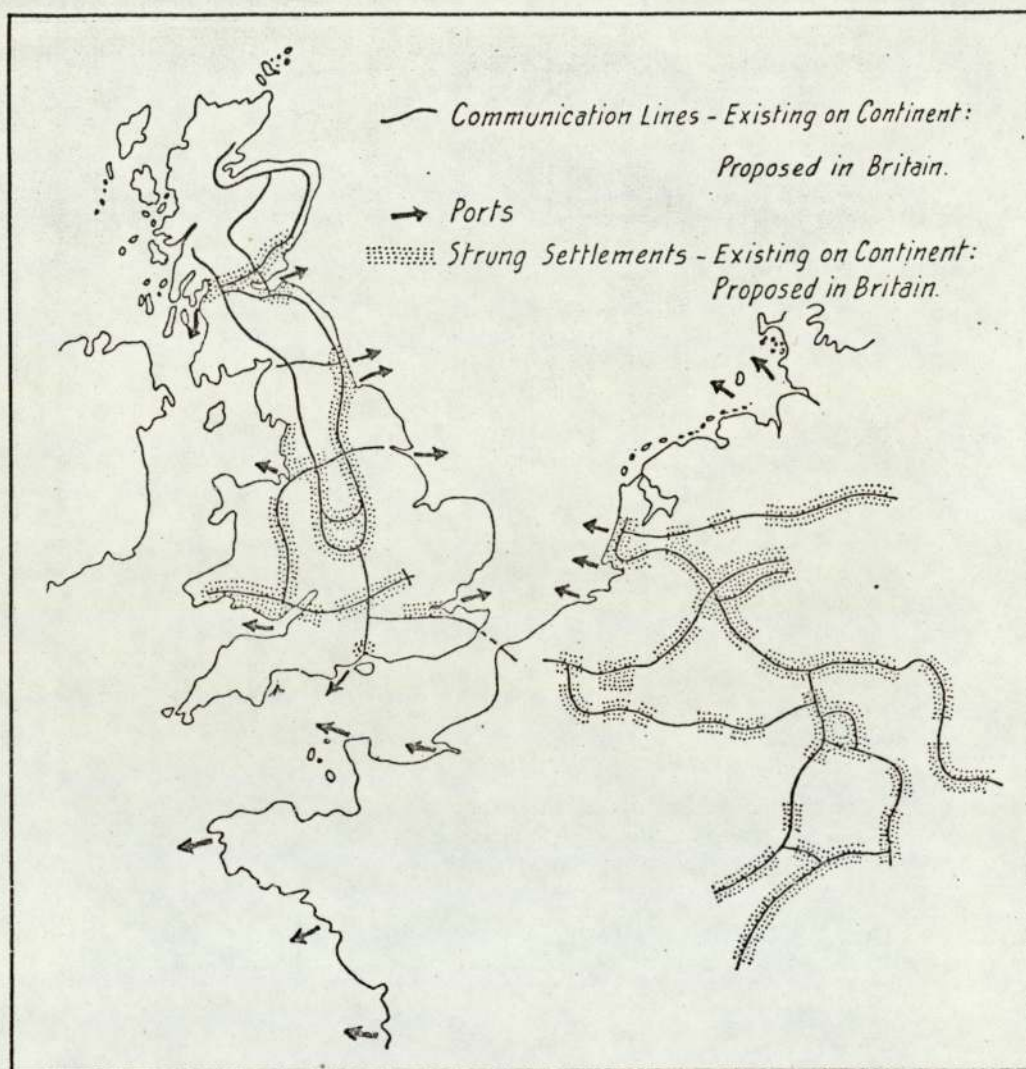


Figure 9.5 Britain: A plan

Source: Rau (1965)

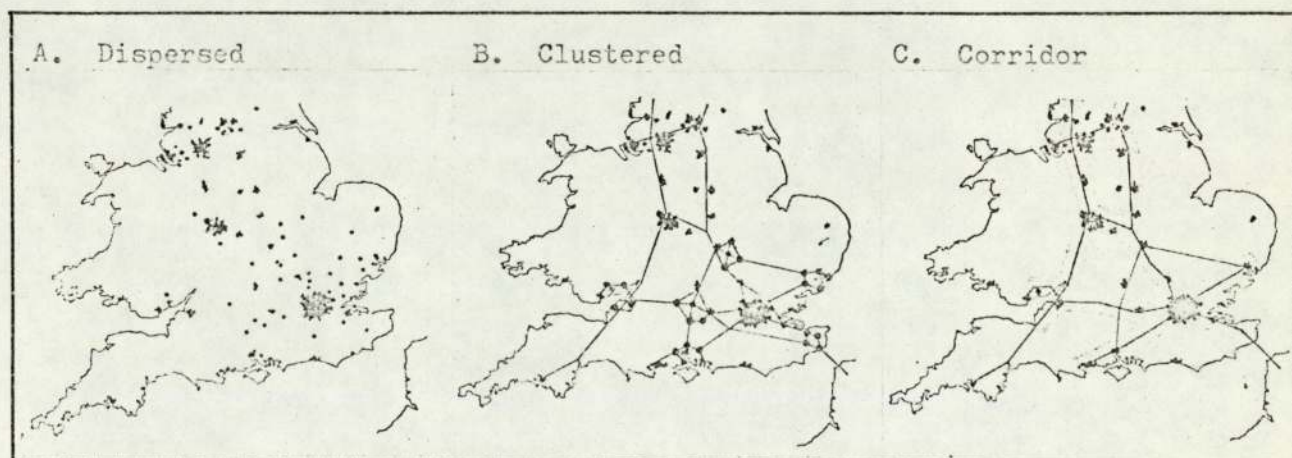


Figure 9.6 England and Wales: Possible methods of development

Source: McConnell (1967)



'Centre' models

We have already traced the evolution of regional and national planning to the point where regional planning was formalised in 1964 and 'The National Plan' published in 1965 (Chapter 4): we now look more closely at the significance of these events in the development of a macro planning model.

Regional economic planning councils were "to provide effective machinery for regional economic planning within the framework of the National Plan for economic development": their concern was "with broad strategy on regional development and the best use of the region's resources [and] their principal function to assist in the formulation of regional plans and to advise on their implementation".<sup>1</sup> These advisory councils became "deeply interested in questions of land planning; and their views on the economic development of their regions have a vital bearing on land planning" (Sharp, 1969, p.180). The resultant studies showed that it was "too soon in the experience of regional planning to aim at achieving a set of Government-approved plans for all the regions which will neatly dovetail with each other and which ... will in aggregate coincide with the forecasts, intentions and capabilities envisaged by the Government for the economy as a whole" (South West Economic Planning Council, 1967, para.34). However, the creation of the Department of the Environment in 1970 and the transfer to it of this regional function was a step towards a more coherent and unitary central approach.

'The National Plan' (D.E.A., 1965) averred the government's intention to make sure that regional planning and national planning are integrated. "Regional planning is concerned with decisions to develop the infrastructure of the economy, and with the location of employment and population. Thus the future of the regions for many years ahead will be largely determined by many of the basic decisions about investment ... in such things as new towns and major road and port schemes" (p.84). Implications for town planning are strong and developed further. "Plans for the development of new housing,

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<sup>1</sup>Hansard, December 10 1964.



industry and communications must march together so that these powerful influences on population movement are so far as possible pulling in the same direction. To make the best use of our land and other natural resources of the country we must reduce the congestion in the crowded areas [and] ensure that the needs of the growing population of the major towns and cities are met without encroaching unduly on good agricultural land or the open spaces needed for recreation and without creating serious congestion problems in the future" (p.86).

It was suggested that central government could influence regional development in three main fields<sup>1</sup>, each implying some need for the Government to become involved with physical/spatial considerations at a policy-/plan-/decision-making level. Furthermore, it was thought necessary "to examine population trends, the pattern of settlement and other relevant factors up to the year 2000 and to report on the areas suitable for large scale development in the longer term ... so that a framework may be drawn up for the long-term planning of public investment" (p.97). The extent to which such matters could be adequately reconciled without some overall national physical strategy appears questionable.<sup>2</sup>

Although 'The National Plan' was abandoned for political and technical reasons, many of its town planning implications have been pursued through ad hoc Government action and regional planning machinery: indeed regional planning in Britain may be said to represent a kind of national

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<sup>1</sup>These are "(1) public investment programmes to modernise the infrastructure of the less prosperous and old industrial regions and reduce the congestion of the large cities; (2) measures to influence population distribution by catering in the short term in all regions for the movement of population (in particular to house urban overspill), and in the long term by providing for population growth in ways most conducive to national economic growth and the provision of a pleasant human environment; and (3) Government action to stimulate regional growth in the less prosperous regions by influencing the geographical pattern of employment and economic activity" (p.95).

<sup>2</sup>Robertson (1965) stresses four physical/economic relationships at national policy level: coherent objectives in "the use of land and investment in many forms of facilities"; development of regional machinery; social investment programmes; and housing issues (pp.6-7).



planning by proxy. Perhaps the nearest attempt by the Government to produce a technical document as a basis for strategic land use and physical structuring on a national scale is represented by the study report 'Long Term Population Distribution in Great Britain' (D.O.E., 1971). This aimed "to ensure that any major new developments ... were planned in such a way as to make the best possible contribution to national economic growth and the improvement of the general environment" (p.1). On the basis of past growth and changes in the geographical distribution of the population, future national projections and their regionalisation, the study examined the future demand for urban land and the framework for planning population distribution with particular reference to new/expanded towns, but also to wider aspects of national strategy. It was careful to emphasise, however, that it was "not an authoritative guide to action [because] as in all strategic planning, the main emphasis must ... be upon flexibility" (para.7.23).

Some idea of central government's interest may be gained by an analysis of 117 studies relevant to regional planning which were initiated between 1965 and mid-1970 (D.O.E., 1971, pp.188-205). These studies<sup>1</sup> have been analysed with respect to the degree of Government involvement on the basis of type of study (Table 9.1) and regional distribution (Table 9.2): this shows that the Government was directly responsible for 42% of the studies, jointly responsible for 12%, and interested in terms of Ministerial overview in the remainder; that it had a particular interest in planned expansion and overspill studies; and that it had a considerable interest in the North West and South East regions. The spatial implications are summarised in Figure 9.7.

The best example of regional planning exercising a partial and proxy role for national planning - in terms of government involvement, format and subject matter - is the Strategic Plan for the South East by the South East Joint Planning Team (1970a), of which the Government was both a sponsor and technical member. This "concerns the future of an area containing about one

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<sup>1</sup>Leaving out 22 land use-transportation studies for which no commissioning authorities are specified.



Table 9.1 Planning studies relevant to regional planning in Britain 1965/mid 1970: commissioning authorities

Source: after D.O.E. (1971)

| Commissioning Authorities | Planning Studies |   |   |    |    |    | Total | %   |
|---------------------------|------------------|---|---|----|----|----|-------|-----|
|                           | A                | B | C | D  | E  | F  |       |     |
| Central government        | -                | 4 | - | 19 | 11 | 6  | 40    | 42  |
| CG with regions/LAs       | 1                | - | - | 2  | 6  | 2  | 11    | 12  |
| Regions                   | -                | - | - | -  | 12 | 3  | 15    | 16  |
| Local Authorities         | 1                | 4 | - | 3  | 20 | 1  | 29    | 30  |
| Total                     | 2                | 8 | - | 24 | 49 | 12 | 95    |     |
| %                         | 2                | 8 | - | 25 | 52 | 13 |       | 100 |

- A Major regional studies (e.g. Strategic Plan for the South East)  
 B Studies into the natural growth or interaction of large towns/cities (e.g. South Hampshire)  
 C Land use transportation studies (e.g. S.E.L.N.E.C.)  
 D Planned expansion and overspill studies (e.g. Central Lancashire New Town)  
 E Sub-regional studies (e.g. Carlisle/West Cumberland)  
 F Miscellaneous (e.g. Dee Estuary)

Table 9.2 Planning studies relevant to regional planning in Britain 1965/mid 1970: regional involvement of commissioning authorities

Source: after D.O.E. (1971)

| Commissioning Authorities | Planning regions |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |   | Total | %   |
|---------------------------|------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|-------|-----|
|                           | N                | NW | YH | WM | EM | SW | SE | EA | W  | S |       |     |
| Central government        | -                | 10 | 2  | 3  | 3  | 1  | 7  | 4  | 5  | 5 | 40    | 42  |
| CG with regions/LAs       | -                | 1  | -  | 1  | -  | 1  | 5  | -  | 1  | 2 | 11    | 12  |
| Regions                   | 1                | -  | 6  | -  | -  | 1  | 2  | -  | 4  | 1 | 15    | 16  |
| Local Authorities         | 2                | 4  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 5  | 10 | 1  | 1  | - | 29    | 30  |
| Total                     | 3                | 15 | 10 | 6  | 5  | 8  | 24 | 5  | 11 | 8 | 95    |     |
| %                         | 3                | 16 | 11 | 7  | 5  | 8  | 25 | 5  | 12 | 8 |       | 100 |



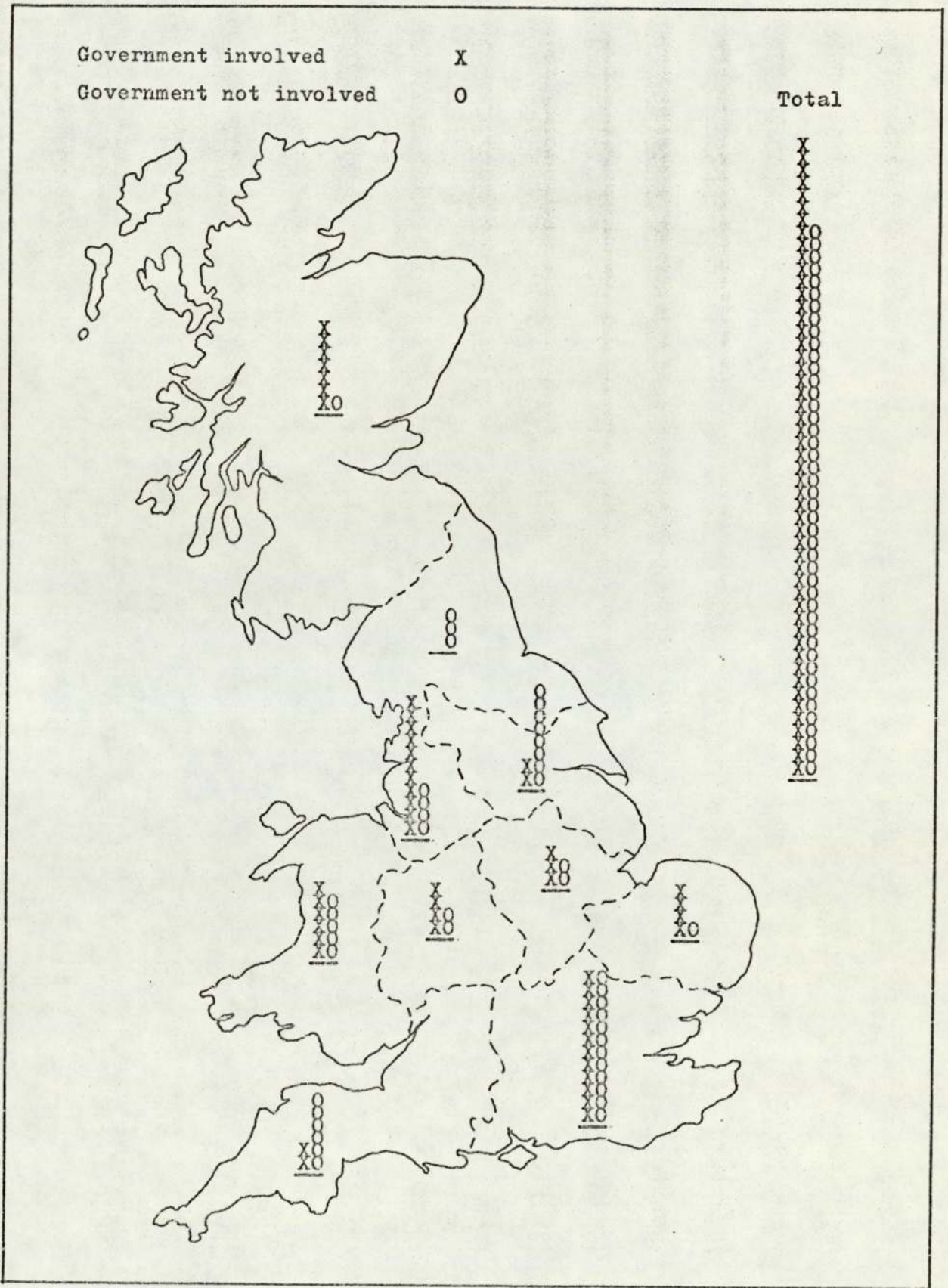


Figure 9.7 Britain: Central government involvement in studies relevant to regional planning

Source: original, after D.O.E. (1971)



third of the population of England and Wales: indirectly it concerns much more, because what happens in the metropolitan region has effects throughout the rest of Britain and, indeed, further afield. Its aim "was the preparation of a strategic framework for decisions on longer-term local development, public investment and policies within the region" (para.1.1). In reducing an immensely complex task to a relatively simple statement of strategic intent, the Plan may claim considerable success, offering, we suggest, a possible model for an indicative national physical plan. Its approach, in essence, is a consideration of providing for peoples' needs in terms of jobs and homes, the physical accommodation of these in town and country, and the necessary public utility and movement systems: alternative hypotheses are evaluated on the basis of economic, social, countryside, transport and feasibility objectives (para.9.8). The resultant strategy focusses upon (a) development of a limited number of major growth areas; (b) redevelopment and rehabilitation of the metropolitan core; (c) expansion of medium-sized employment centres; (d) preservation / conservation of the countryside, including the promotion of agriculture; and (e) provision of a road/rail network to serve intra- and inter-regional needs. Figure 9.8 shows stages in the evolution and major elements of physical strategy for the national metropolitan region.

#### 'Periphery' models

Using the West Midlands region<sup>1</sup> as our 'periphery' model, we examine the extent to which planning studies for this region have recognised the need for a national contextual framework. We begin in 1965 with the first of a series of studies produced in response to the new regional awareness of the mid 1960s prior to which regional guidance had virtually depended on 'The West Midlands Plan' (Abercrombie and Jackson, 1948)<sup>2</sup> - advisory in character, sponsored and

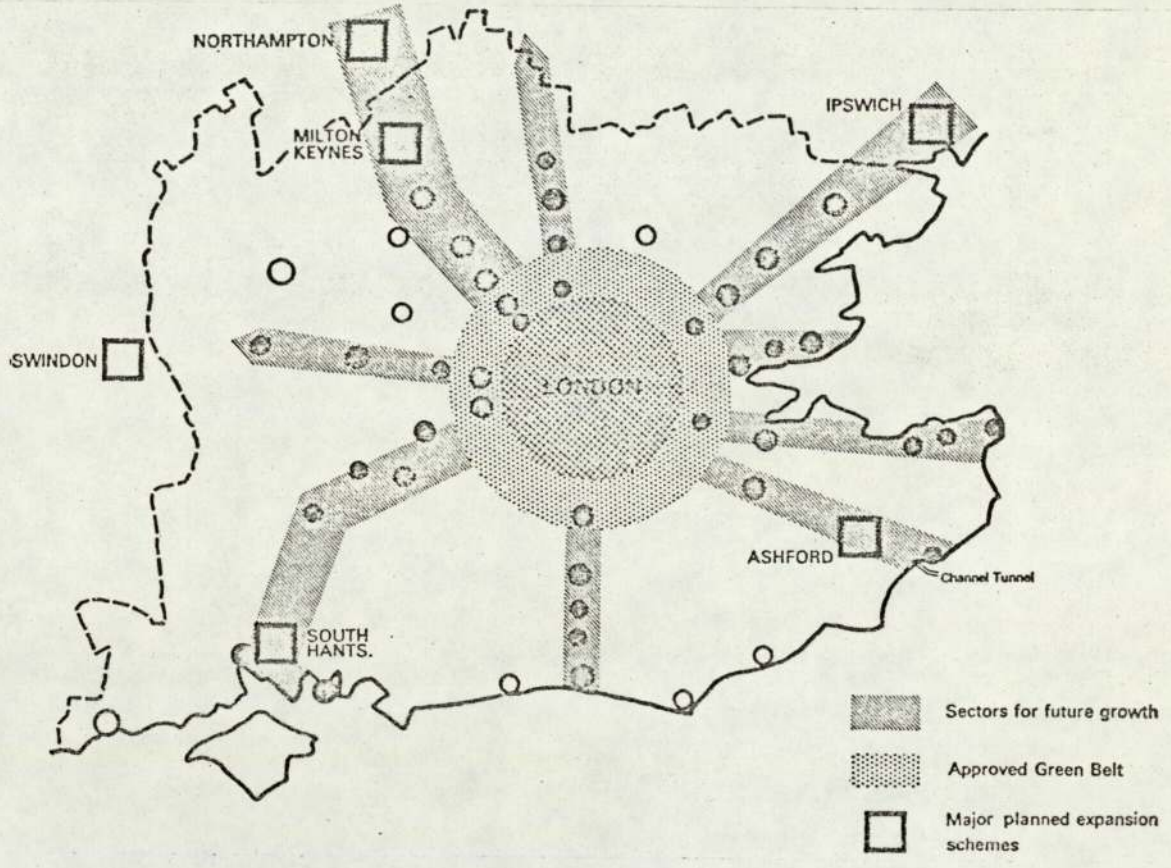
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<sup>1</sup>For a regional perspective, see Cherry (1971), Hall (1971), Rodgers (1972) Hall (1973, 1).

<sup>2</sup>Complemented by 'Conurbation' (West Midlands Group, 1948).



A. A strategy for the South East



B. Strategic plan for the South East

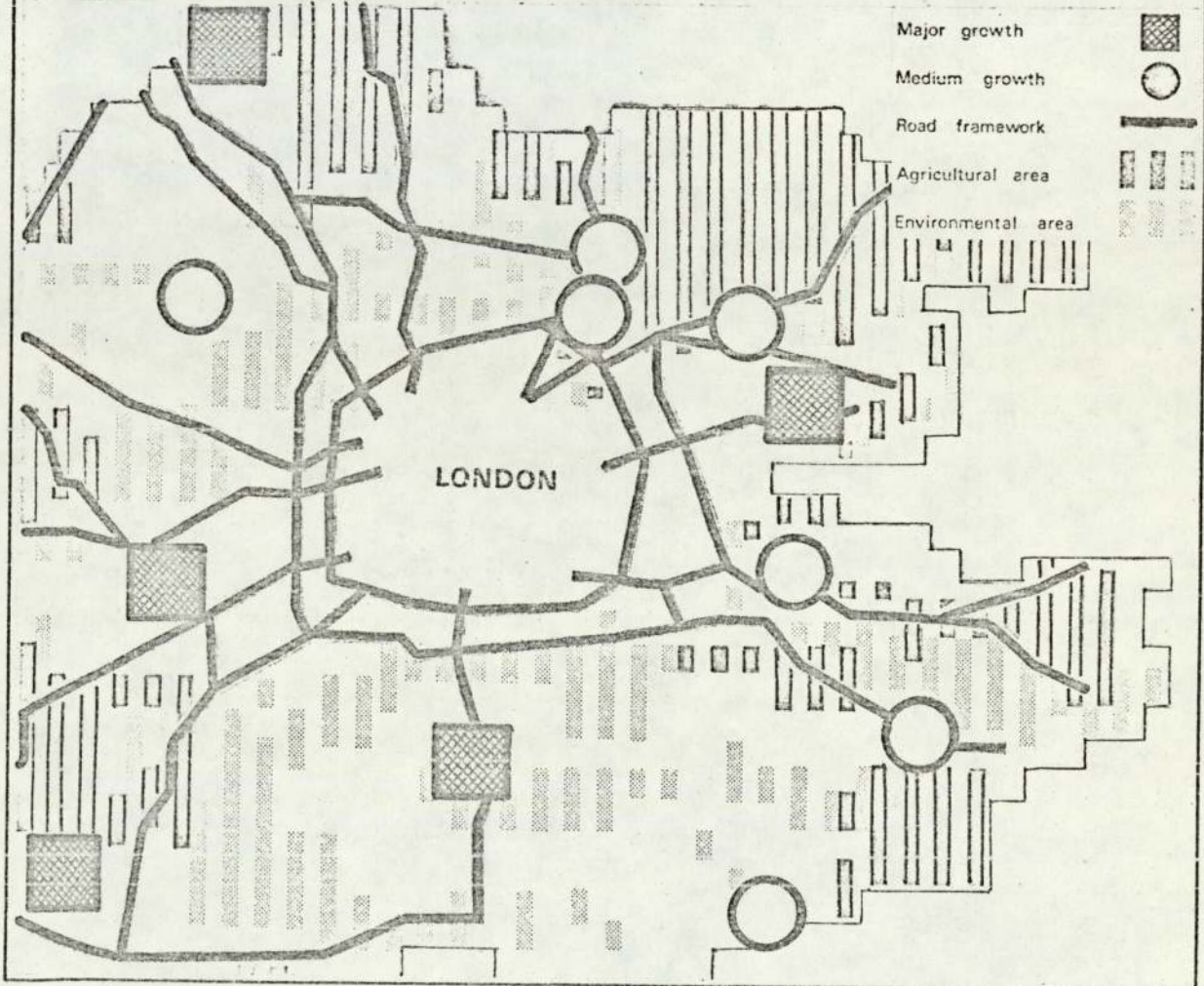


Figure 9.8 The South East: The evolution of a planning strategy  
 Source: S.E.E.P.C. (1967), S.E.J.P.T. (1970)



accepted by the Minister and, in essence, a strategy for conurban limitation and decentralisation of 'inner' and 'outer' rings of settlement.

'The West Midlands - a regional study' (D.E.A., 1965) sought to provide a basis for future plans for the region. Rapid and unexpected population increases in the 1950s, together with urban renewal, would require an additional 600,000 dwellings by 1981. Thus, if urban containment and avoidance of mass commuting were to be objectives, a change of regional policy to include major self-contained expansions well beyond the conurbation would be needed (Eversley, Jackson and Lomas, 1965) and would, in turn, involve fundamental changes in national industrial location policy to provide the necessary I.D.C.s (Lomas and Wood, 1970). The 1965 study proposed a fourfold strategy of peripheral expansion, satellite development close-in, additional projects further out and an independent new centre for the longer term (paras. 198-219). However, it only briefly acknowledged "that many of this region's features of interest must be considered at least as much in their national as in their regional context ... in so far as these depend on national investment programmes in which questions of priority can arise between particular kinds of need and particular parts of the country" (para. 179). And, said the report vaguely, study policies are "concerned largely with the local physical pattern of development. It is assumed that they will be examined subsequently in the light of whatever assessments are currently available of the aggregate need and potentialities of all regions, and of the basic assumptions in national plans" (para. 180).

Two years later 'The West Midlands: Patterns of Growth' (West Midlands Economic Planning Council, 1967) set out conclusions on the 1965 Study as a step towards "an agreed framework in which future development of the region may take place" (para. 18). In its physical proposals the Economic Planning Council re-affirmed containment and the new towns/town development schemes: additionally it considered five possible sectors of growth - Dawley/Wellington/Oakengates, Worcester, Burton-on-Trent, North Staffordshire and



the South West. Central government responded by rejecting changes in industrial location policy and suggested that solutions be found within commuting distance (Hall, 1973, 2, pp.540-541). For its part, the Council, in discussing the need for a long term regional strategy, merely noted the Government's comment that any such strategy should be examined in the light of a "national review" (W.M.E.P.C., 1967, para.133) and that "one indication of possible future lines of development is given by the Government's present consideration of the feasibility of major expansions on Humberside and Severnside" (para.136).

The national scale received more attention in 'The West Midlands - an economic appraisal' (W.M.E.P.C., 1971) which was the outcome of a Working Party set up by the Planning Council to investigate "the prospects and nature of economic growth [including] problems involved and action required within the limits imposed by national considerations to enable the region to play its part in the economic development of the country ..." (p.84). A chapter was devoted to 'The West Midlands in the National Setting' and it was recognised that "a region cannot be viewed in isolation, it is not a separate country but a part of the whole" (para.2.1). Although the appraisal was primarily economic and regional in character, physical and national implications were considered. Since economic prospects depend significantly "on how regional planning problems are themselves dealt with" (para.2.18), regard was had for "the physical side of economic planning" (para.8.2). Among the possible alternative forms (paras.8.6-8.14), peripheral and corridor growth were preferred because of central place advantages and efficient communications respectively: the corridor option was particularly favoured in the national context. The Council noted, however, that "a great deal depends on where the biggest expansion is going to occur in adjoining regions", and wondered "whether enough co-ordination of economic planning is taking place between the regions and what developments are envisaged along the line of the Region's most heavily used route, that to the South East" (para.8.7). This suggests that the Council felt a need for more positive



and coherent national approach, not only to economic planning, but also to physical aspects.

'A Developing Strategy for the West Midlands' (West Midlands Regional Study, 1971) was the result of the desire of the West Midland Planning Authorities' conference to complement the work of the Economic Planning Council by resolving regional issues "within the framework of a clear and incisive strategy [which] would offer a broad, consistent and further-ranging treatment of problems and opportunities in the region" (p.1). Against a background of population increase of 1.5M over 30 years and of industrial mobility severely constrained by local linkages and national distribution of industry policy, a physical strategy was sought. The basic solution was the provision, as part of the economic restructuring of the conurbation, of five main industrial zones around its edge, and of residential areas within commuting distance. Locationally, the strategy's main weight lies in a north-east/south-west axis through the region: there are subsidiary axes to Telford, the Potteries and Coventry; significant residential locations associated with the M42 proposal; and a national growth area based on Lichfield/Tamworth/Burton.

As with the Planning Council's economic appraisal, the need was seen "to take a wider field of view, framing the area of the Strategy in its inter-regional setting ... first, to discern the extent to which the elements of the broader pattern of development were likely to influence the form of the preferred strategy; and, secondly, to see whether we could make out any guidelines for the directions in which growth within the region might be deployed" (paras.202-203). Figure 9.9 shows components of the wider context which were specifically "borne in mind [because they] could have a marked influence on the structure of growth in [and] important relationships with the region" (para.205). The strategy noted the "pronounced tendency ... for substantial growth along the urban spine of the country" (para.206) and the advantages of centrality which the national road/rail lattice conferred:



A. The European setting



B. The inter-regional setting - studies 'borne in mind'

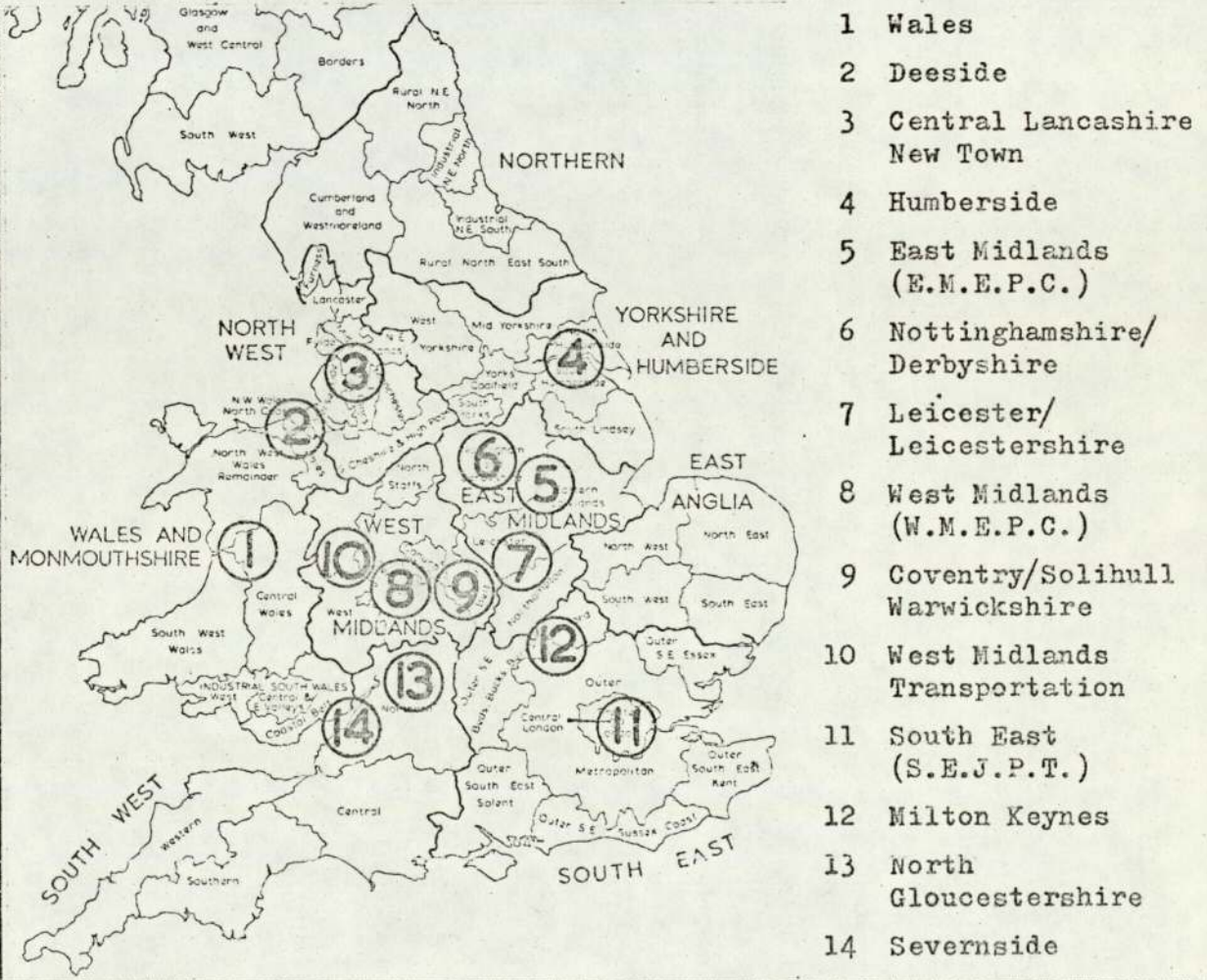


Figure 9.9 'A Developing Strategy for the West Midlands': wider context

Source: after W.M.R.S. (1971)



these factors would emphasise the axial belt and permit a more diffuse pattern of access and hence of activities and settlement (para.207). It also noted that there might be a case for "a further international airport more convenient to the region than ... Fouless [and which] might be used as a linchpin for urban growth within the framework of an inter-regional strategy" (para.208).

On the basis of these considerations, and in the absence of 'official' guidance, the Strategy proceeded to devise its own national viewpoint by identifying "three possible concepts for the design of urban growth in its inter-regional context ... within which the structure of growth within the region had to be set": consolidation of the major north-west/south-east axis; growth along a north-east/south-west axis; and U-shaped development around the southern end of the Pennines (paras.209-210). This analysis leads to the conclusion that, because of its position, the region "will form a key element in any practicable inter-regional pattern of development": that "the region will be stronger if it is set within the positive elements of an inter-regional setting"; and "that it is only in the long term that the decisive trend in inter-regional development will emerge" (para.214). Thus, trends established in the short-term situation - based, for example, on the five directions of growth which the Strategy considered (Figure 9.10) - will condition the longer term and, if made on an ad hoc regional basis rather than as an integral part of a macro strategic framework,<sup>1</sup> could contribute to fortuitous, and possibly unfortunate, national patterns of development. And in the specific matter of planning for leisure (Figure 9.11) the Strategy found that "increasing pressures on its resources will call for the definition of a hierarchy of recreational areas within a national context" (para.279).

It is not surprising that regional studies should seek some indicative national context but it is perhaps less expected that a sub-regional study

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. the proposals illustrated in Figure 9.8.



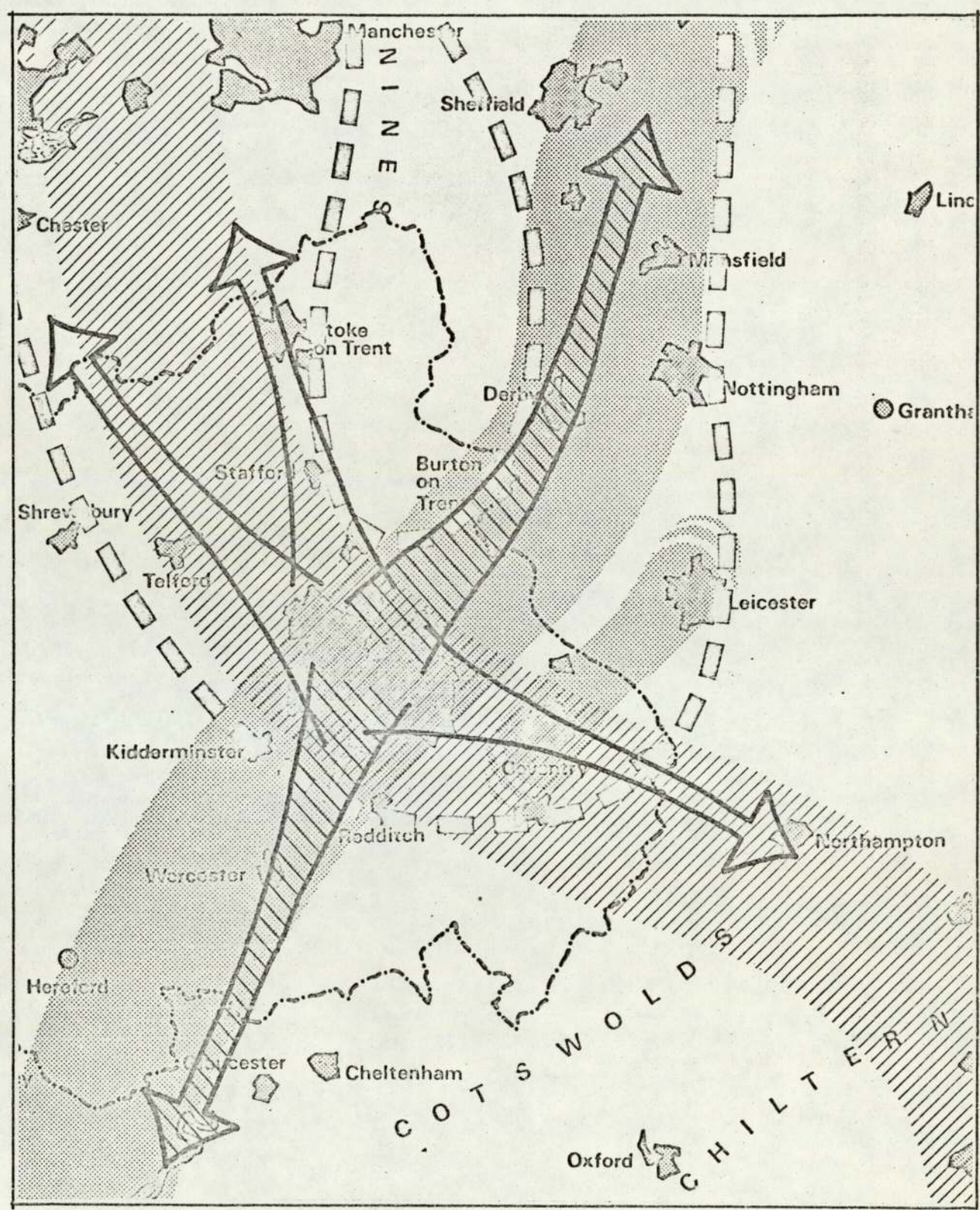


Figure 9.10 'A Developing Strategy for the West Midlands': assumed inter-regional context for directional growth

Source: after W.M.R.S. (1971)

Potential directions of regional growth

Main weight of the strategy





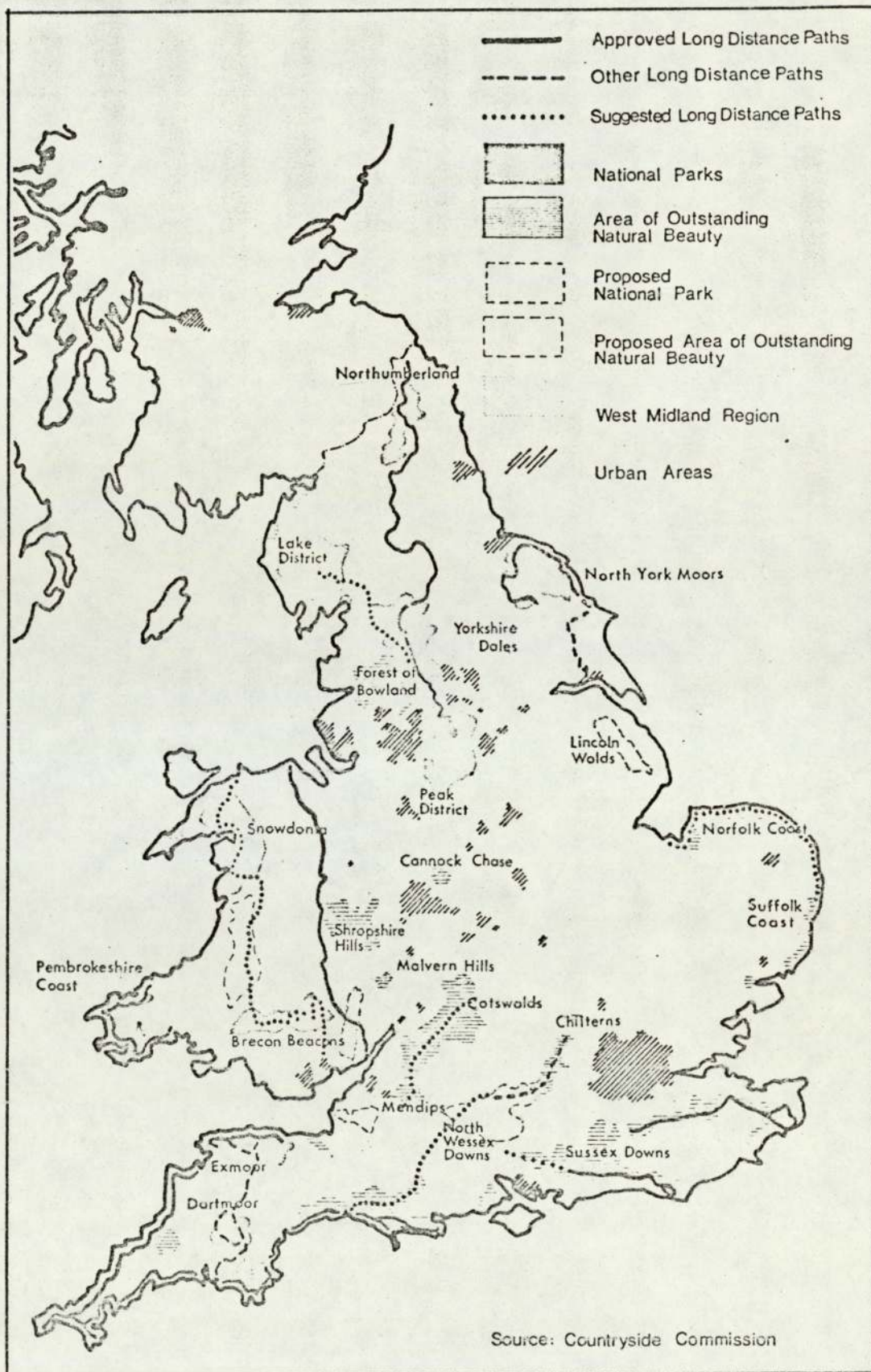


Figure 9.11 Britain: National recreational context as seen by the West Midland Regional Study

Source: W.M.R.S. (1971)



should do so: yet, the 'Coventry-Solihull-Warwickshire Sub-Regional Planning Study' (Coventry C.C., Solihull C.B.C., and Warwickshire C.C., 1971) puts the case very clearly. "There is no explicit national planning strategy. No document exists which considers the future of land use and the distribution of population and employment comprehensively ... (para.12.1). We therefore have to foresee a national context for the sub-region's development by taking an oblique view of policies, Green Papers, Statements and forecasts covering a spectrum of government activities and interests. Added together it must be said that the indications are powerful. Rather than explicitly stating a national planning strategy, it might be said that they assume one but do not admit it. It is not necessarily a bad strategy because of that. If we have misinterpreted the indications it is open to official sources to correct our reading of them" (para.12.2).

The Study accordingly produced its own national context (Figure 9.12) in lieu of any such specific or explicit guidance by central government. Many of its views complemented those of the Strategy, and it concluded that "if all these indications can be interpreted as a national strategy ... within the West Midlands, this sub-region appears best placed to take advantage of the opportunities the national strategy will allow" (para.12.8). Whether or not this is proven, it is of substantial academic relevance to our argument for physical planning at national scale.

From our consideration of a national approach to town planning through these various models, the main point which emerges is not so much a lack of general concern or involvement of the 'centre' as its specific failure to provide a positive, coherent, unitary view for guidance of the 'periphery'. Thus, while the 'centre' is active, there may be a case for extending its activity to include an indicative national physical plan, and it will be noted that the more recent 'periphery' models seem to be seeking broadly similar physical planning policy guidance to that advocated in the hypothetical models. The West Midlands Regional Study and the Coventry-Solihull-



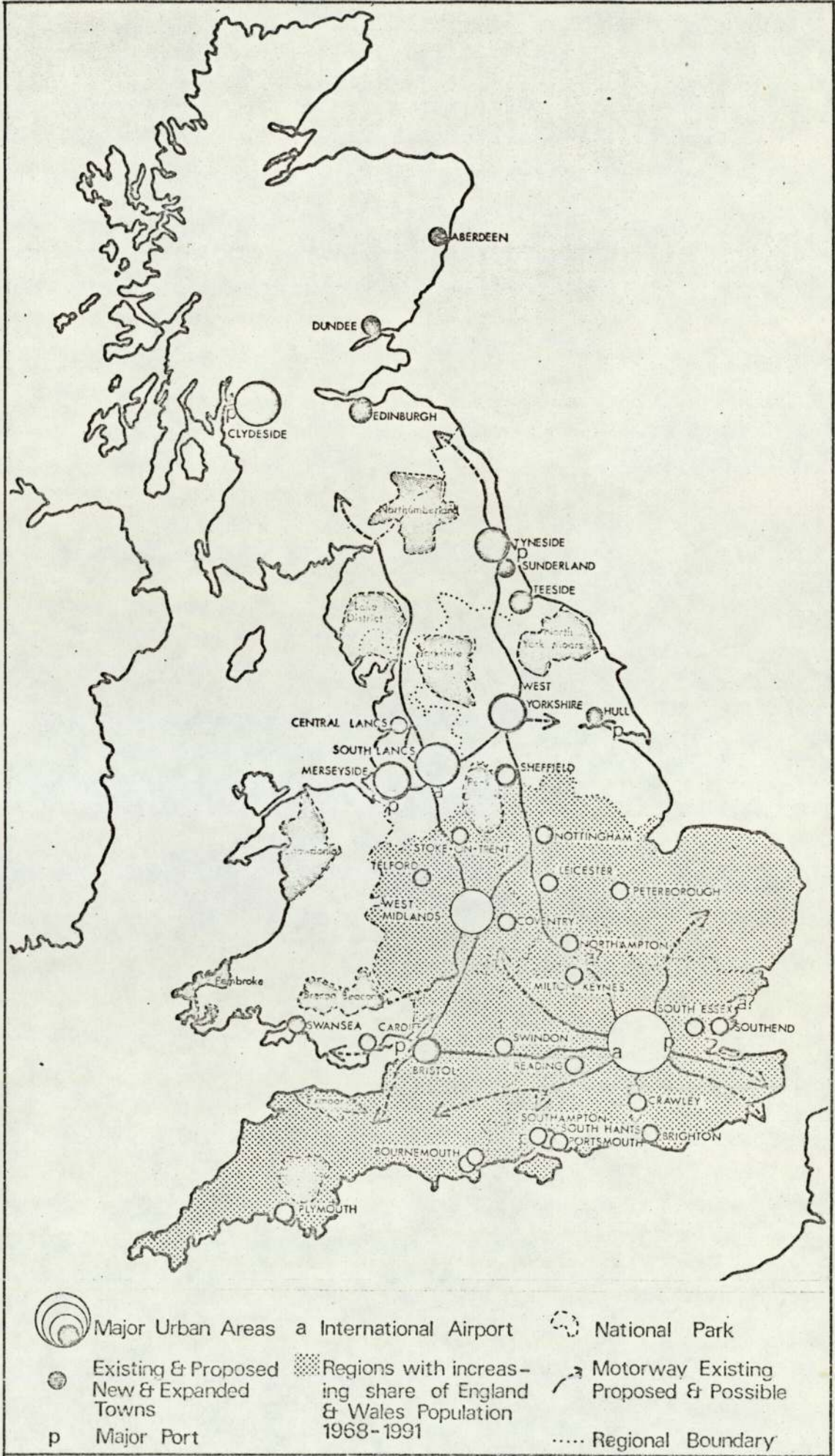


Figure 9.12 Britain: National context as seen by the Coventry-Solihull-Warwickshire Sub-Regional Planning Study

Source: Coventry C.C., Solihull C.G.C., Warwickshire C.C. (1971)



Warwickshire Sub-Regional Planning Study teams especially seemed to feel it a very real handicap that there was no 'official' national context within which they could consider and develop their own particular regional physical strategies. We suggest, therefore, that a national approach to the issues raised in Chapter 8 along the lines we shall outline in the next chapter might provide the kind of macro context, the lack of which has been highlighted, and apparently regretted, in these case studies.

#### B. OVERSEAS EXAMPLES

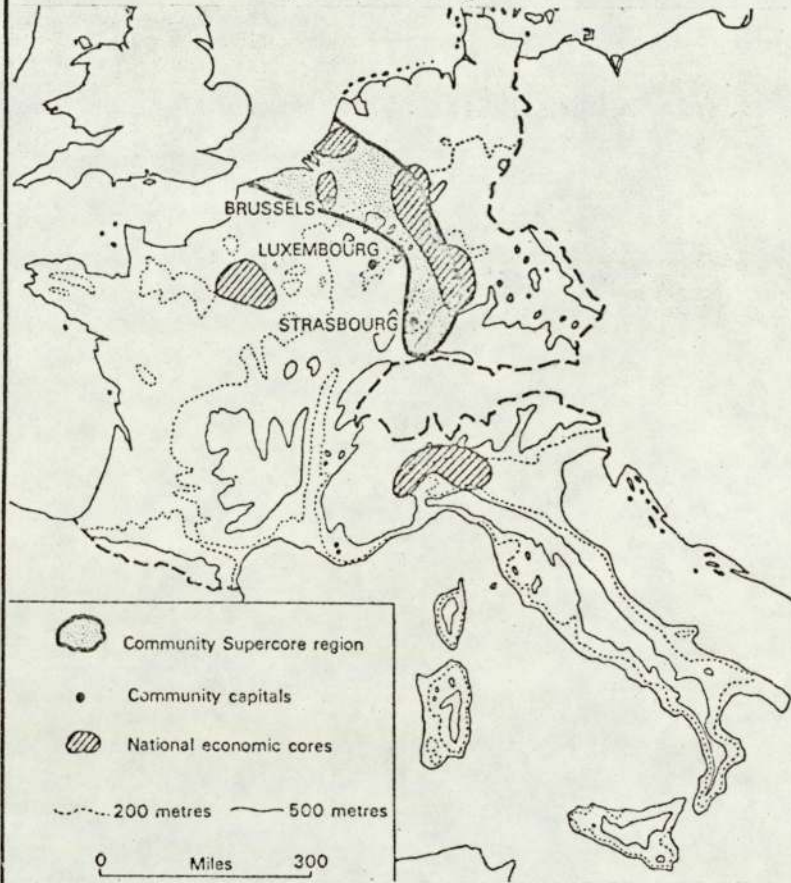
We next consider procedural lessons which some experiences abroad offer in the development of a British national physical planning model: it would also be relevant to consider Britain's supra-national position in substantive terms with particular reference to interaction between other European states with which this country has close physical links. Therefore, while in line with our general theme we concentrate on procedural aspects of national planning approaches in the United States, France, Holland, Denmark, Brazil, and Israel<sup>1</sup>, we do not forget the importance of establishing effective and harmonious substantive relationships. For example, in view of E.E.C. commitments (Walsh and Paxton, 1972) we need to ensure that the town planning implications of our political, social and economic connections with the continent (Butler, 1966; R.T.P.I., 1973) - especially in respect of such key elements as urbanisation, regional policy, communications, energy and the 'Community super-core' (Parker, 1968) - are adequately resolved. Nor must we allow the need for a strong European orientation (Figure 9.13) to obscure the importance of planning for a continued and enhanced world-wide role (Ginsburg, 1968).

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<sup>1</sup>These examples are selected principally for their instructive relevance to the question of national goal formulation in a complex society (United States); to the operation of national planning systems in highly developed countries where a comprehensive approach and a strong regard for physical planning is evident (France, Holland, Denmark); and to the application of physical planning to national problems in a developing country (Brazil) and an emergent nation-state (Israel).



A. The E.E.C. super-core region



B. Some Anglo/Continental relationships

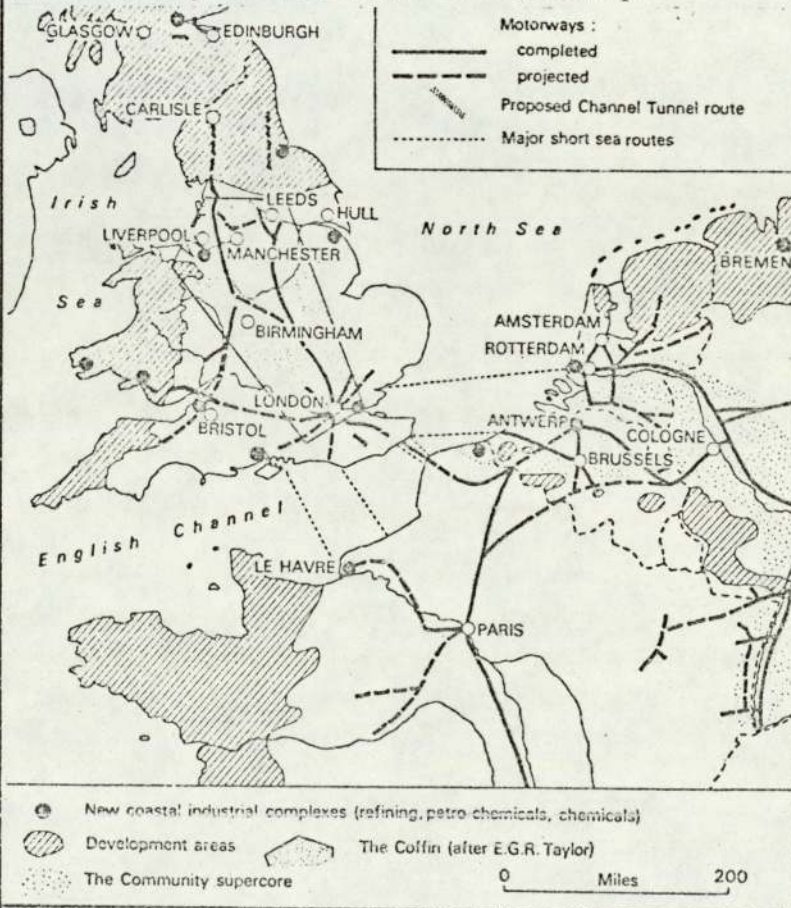


Figure 9.13 Western Europe: A supra-national context

Source: Parker (1968)



### The United States

The American example points the way towards remedying a long-felt want of British town planning in terms of national goals and objectives. Our model here is 'Goals for Americans', the attempt by President Eisenhower's Commission on National Goals (1960) to formulate explicit statements concerning the country's aims. Fourteen goals related to the individual; equality; the democratic process; education; the arts and sciences; the democratic economy; economic growth; technological change; agriculture; living conditions; health and welfare; helping to build an open and peaceful world; the defence of the free world; disarmament; and the United Nations.

This represented part of a conscious effort to devise a general framework of integrated policies and programmes for the country and to establish a set of goals dealing with various facets of national activity.<sup>1</sup> Commenting on the Commission's work, Chadwick (1971, p.144) observes that "such a statement, with its characteristic emphasis on a market economy, would require modification elsewhere, and it is not suggested that the goals listed are appropriate for this, or any other country; what is possible is that the consideration of this attempt at national goal formulation could be helpful in essaying a set of goals for a British national or broad regional situation". We would endorse this view as applicable to the development of an indicative national physical plan for Britain.

### France

The French example is helpful both because the country has regional problems similar to Britain's and because France has developed an advanced system, the strength of which lies in its macro-economic aspects, as opposed to the micro-physical emphasis of British planning. This is found in a series of four year plans which illustrate the French awareness that the need for resource allocation in a regional context requires "rational, spatial organisation on a national scale" (Hansen, N. 1968, p.54) and poses "the problem

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. 'Towards a National Urban Policy' (Moynihan, 1970a, b).



of a hierarchy between regional and national objectives (Boudeville, 1968, p.54).

Planning in France is motivated by the concept of 'aménagement du territoire' - seeking regional balance through "a better distribution of the population in relation to national resources and economic activities ... not toward purely economic goals, but more toward the welfare and full development of the potentialities of the population" (Hansen, N. 1968, p.6). The French system has well-established procedures and agencies for planning at national level (Figure 9.14A). Government responsibility is vested in an Interministerial Committee for Regional Planning on behalf of which the direction of national planning and the preparation of the four year plans is carried out by the Commissariat Général du Plan (C.G.P.). National and regional planning is co-ordinated by the Délégation à l'Aménagement du Territoire et à l'Action Régionale (D.A.T.A.R.) while research is undertaken by the Commission Nationale d'Aménagement du Territoire (C.N.A.T.). This centralist machinery is effectively integrated with regional and local levels and with consultative and private organisations.

Formulation of the Fifth Plan (Figure 9.14B) was initiated by a report prepared by C.N.A.T. within a general long term perspective, but giving scope for the elaboration of more specific regional objectives. On this basis C.G.P. submitted for Parliament's approval a Report on the Principal Orientations of national planning options and goals, followed - after complex consultations between national and regional agencies - by the regional orientations of the national plan. These national and regional goals were then converted into precise objectives and policies (sectoral and global) of the Fifth Plan and of its regional sections by the respective national and regional agencies. Finally, the plan was broken down into annual national budgets which were regionalised to form the basis of local 'programmes of modernisation' (new towns, transportation improvements, etc.).



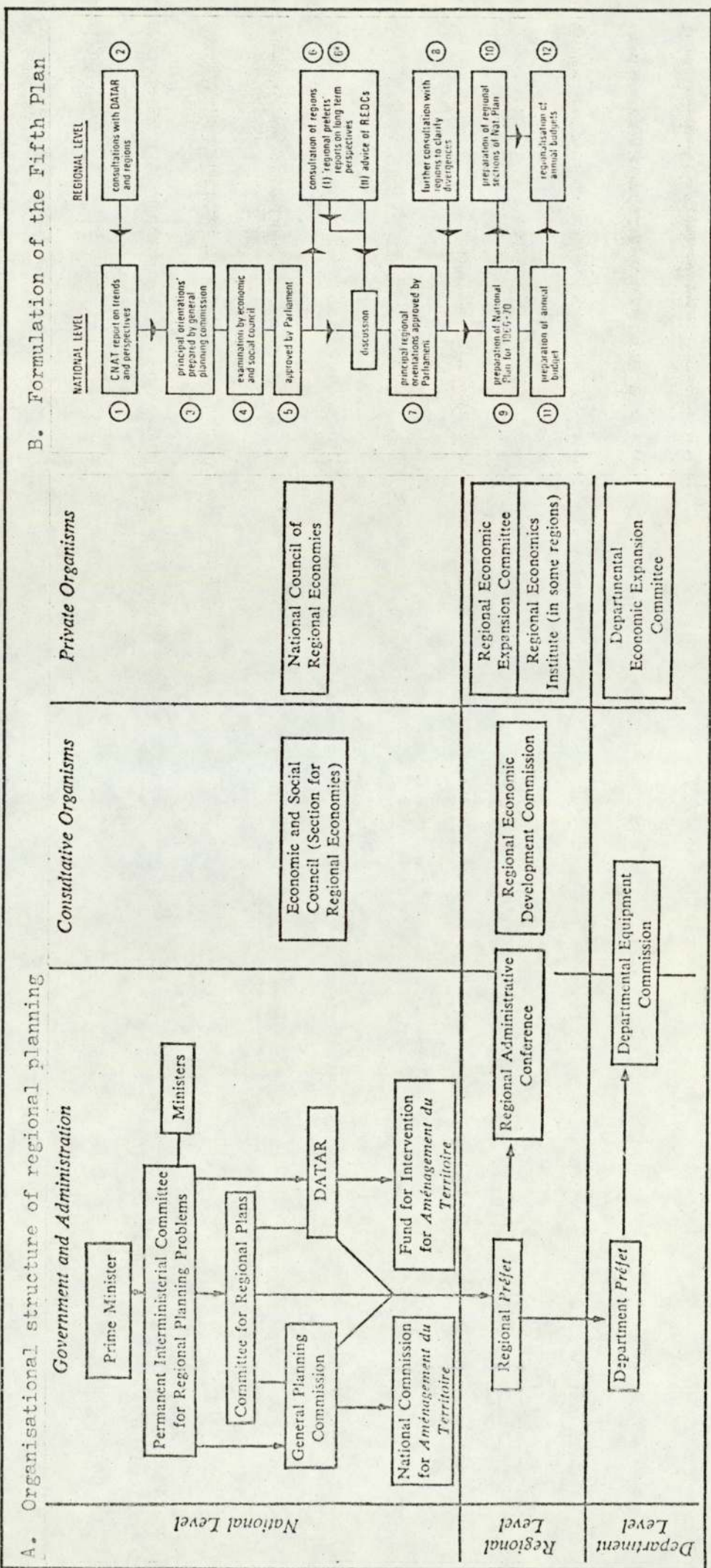


Figure 9.14 French national planning  
 Source: Hansen, N. (1968), Geddes, M. (1971)



The plan itself "is purely a statement of intentions [imposing] no obligation whatsoever even upon the government" (Boudeville, 1968, p.140): its regionalisation<sup>1</sup> in the medium-term gives it "geographic precision and local adhesion", while in the long-term "it is the expression of the remodelling of the national territory [and] a guide to national planning" (pp.154-155). Particularly interesting from a physical planning standpoint is the acceptance of the national importance of the urban hierarchy and the definition by C.N.A.T. of eight 'métropoles d'équilibres' (Figure 7.5)<sup>2</sup>. These constitute the highest level in the hierarchy, acting both as counter magnets to Paris in the programme to achieve regional balance and as key elements of the national urban policy which aims to produce a settlement hierarchy (based on the city regional concept) offering the best opportunities for the development of the economic and social life of the country (Hansen, N. 1968, pp.228-249).

Similarities may be discerned in the French and British systems such as the comparability between regional economic planning councils and the French R.E.D.C.s, between N.E.D.C. and the Economic and Social Council, and between N.I.E.S.R. and C.N.A.T., but it is from the differences that we learn most. Thus, while the autocracy of the French regional préfets may seem unacceptable compared with our economic planning councils and the spirit of the Kilbrandon Report in respect of devolution, the French system nevertheless offers Britain a model for greater commitment to macro planning. The French method of formulating alternative national and regional goals by iterative consultation between these levels, their translation into objectives by a like process, and the articulation of the outcome in 'plan' form might profitably be adapted to the British situation (Geddes, 1971, p.194).

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<sup>1</sup>By means of (a) long-term regional goals; (b) short-term objectives (the Regional Section of the National Plan); and (c) the annual budget.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. the provinces and regions of Maud and Kilbrandon respectively.



### The Netherlands

As early as 1941 the Dutch government conceived the idea of a national plan, but, because of its complexity and the difficulty of adapting a 'master plan' to rapid change, the national plan per se was abolished in favour of a more flexible policy-oriented approach. Holland now possesses one of the world's most advanced national town planning systems centred around a coherent overall macro policy, not a technical blueprint: though its characteristics and achievements are well-known, we stress again here those features particularly apposite to our thesis.

Town planning in the Netherlands represents a notable response by a country experiencing great pressures on limited land resources - 20M population on 40,000 sq. kms. by the year 2000 as an integral but independent national element in the North-West European Megalopolis. Also within this small country there is considerable imbalance: about 75% of the population is in the west and south with only 25% in the relatively under-developed north and east. The Dutch believe that natural development must be used to greatest advantage in the former and an active settlement policy pursued in the latter: in each case the functions and character of town and country require most careful planning, as does an effective transport system. In its Second Report on Physical Planning, the Netherlands Government (1966) produced fundamental policies to these ends including concentrated decentralisation of settlement; maintenance of the central open space of the Randstad; more even distribution of population, including stimulation of development in the north; new major industrial/seaport areas; and an improved private/public transport system. The principle of concentrated decentralisation, for example, is a national aim designed both to combat uncontrolled growth and to provide good urban/rural facilities through planned dispersal based on the city regional concept, including balanced policy for avoidance of stagnation and protection of agriculture/recreation in small rural communities.



Implementation of such policies depends upon a threefold system of administration involving state (national), province (regional) and municipality (local) levels (Figure 9.15): this provides for a firm but flexible national approach. The Physical Planning Act 1965 obliges municipalities to produce legally binding development plans which "taken together, determine in fact the national pattern of space utilisation" (Idenberg, 1971, p.41). Provincial plans, however, "are only guideline programmes reflecting an elastic conception in which local ideas and national desires and potentialities are accommodated" (p.45). At national level the aim is not an all-embracing design for future land use, but a general policy framework, including 'structural outlines' relating to inter alia, settlement, transport, industrialisation, agriculture and recreation. "Thus physical planning is not merely an instrument of regional economic policy; it is a separate sector with its own policy and its own function - the promotion of the best possible environmental structure in a given area" (Netherlands Government, 1972, p.2).

The Minister of Housing and Physical Planning is empowered, on the basis of national policy, to give directives to provinces and to require provinces to give directives to municipalities with regard to their respective plans, thus ensuring the State's ability to exert influence. Government intentions are summarised in a structural scheme for the Netherlands about the year 2000 (Figure 9.16) which, in view of the Dutch insistence on planning in an international context<sup>1</sup>, is set within a structural pattern for the Netherlands in a wider environment (Figure 9.17). As a policy instrument, the structural scheme is not binding: in the words of the Minister, it gives "a development pattern which the government sees as the most desirable pattern on which to base its policy. The fact that the map is referred to as 'indicative' implies ... that it is to a certain extent of a schematic nature. The map is not intended to give exact locations

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. the international model proposed by the Council of Europe (1968, pp.92-86).



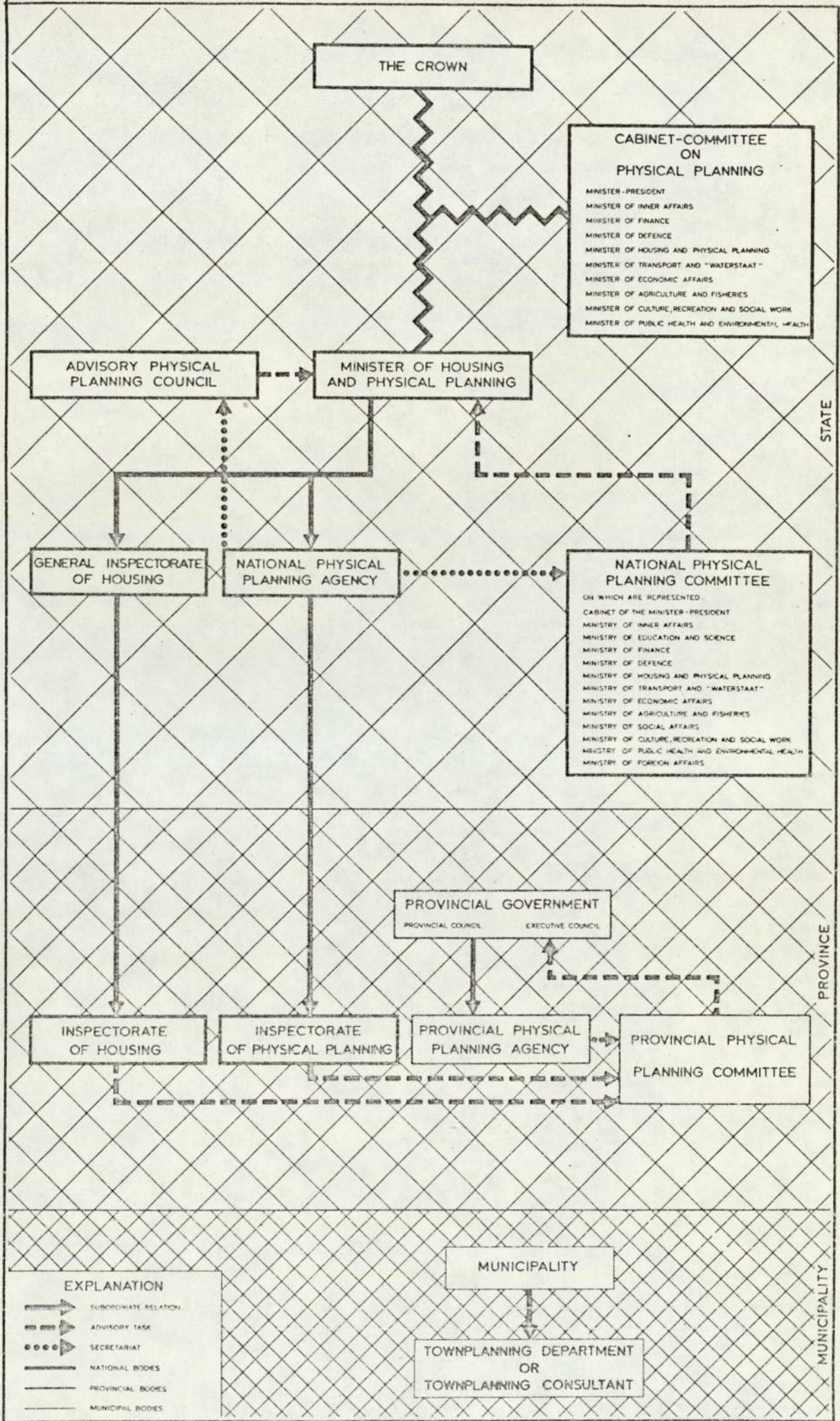


Figure 9.15 The Netherlands: Organisation of physical planning  
 Source: Netherlands Government (1970)



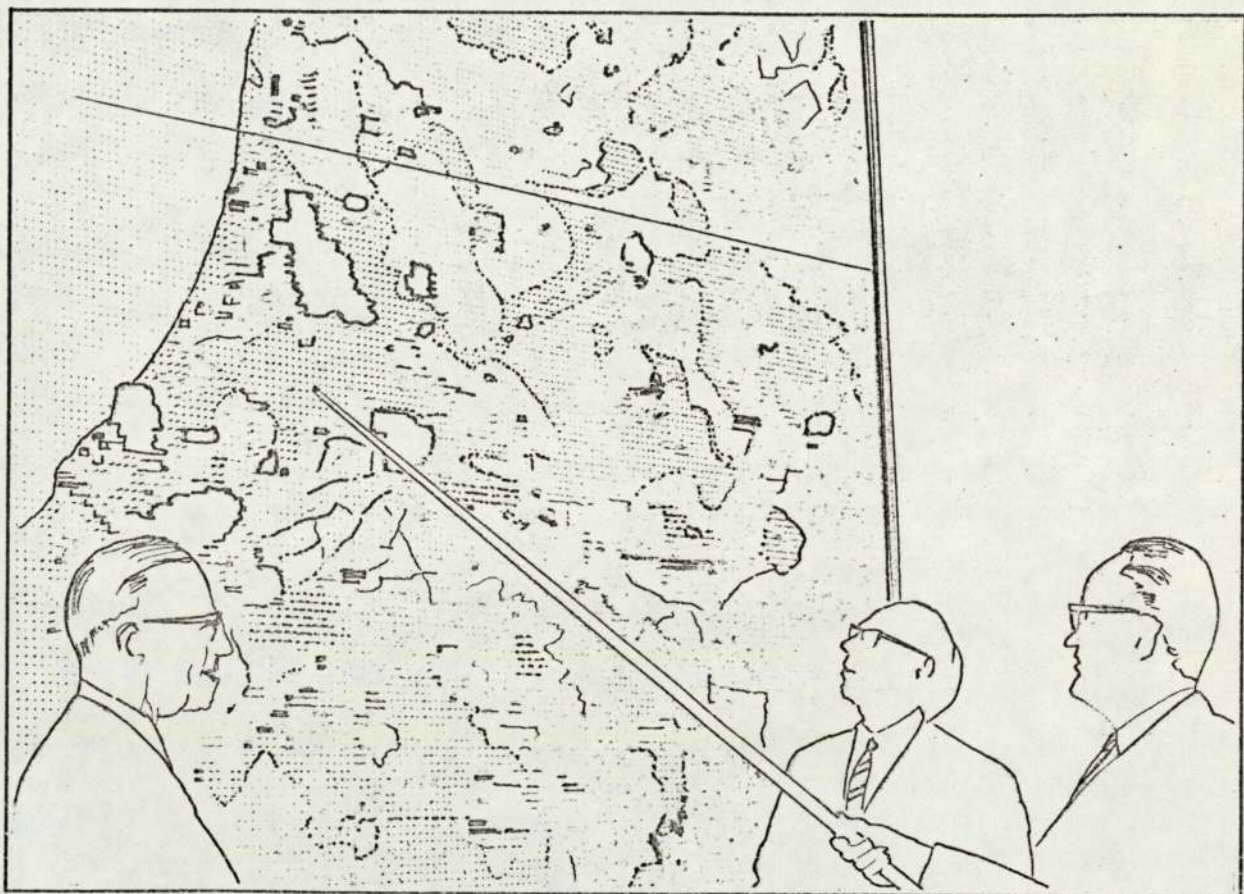


Figure 9.16 The Netherlands: Structural scheme about the year 2000

Source: Idenburg (1970)

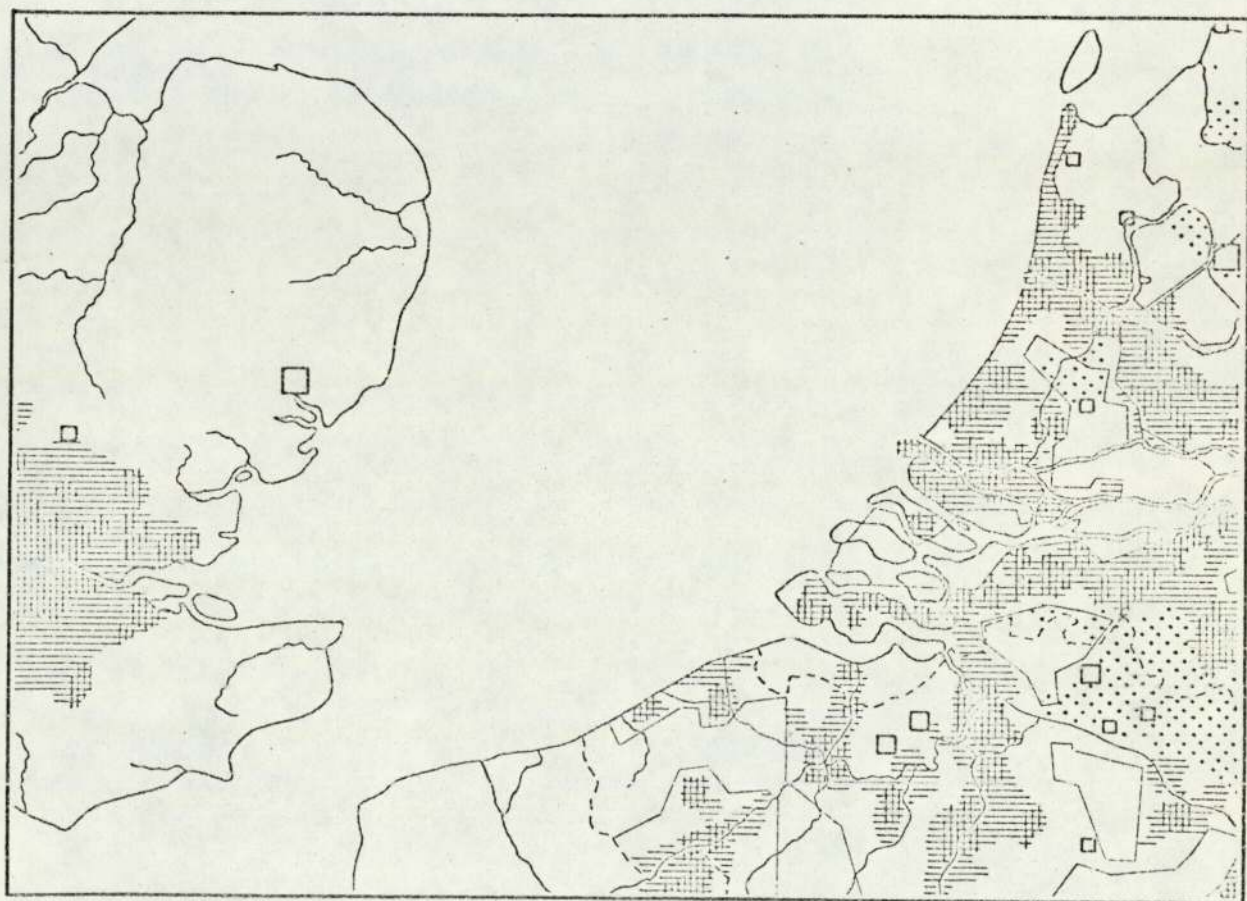


Figure 9.17 The Netherlands: Structural pattern in a wider environment

Source: Netherlands Government (1972)



["but represents"] the desirable structure of urban areas, of the network of main roads, of the green belts and in addition such differentiation of these areas as is considered essential" (Ministry of Housing and Physical Planning, 1967, p.8).

A keynote of this system is co-operation between national, regional and local levels: "it may well be that certain alternative possibilities will prove to be unacceptable from the point of view of national physical planning policy ["while others"] turn out to be just as good or better suitable than the pattern given by the structural scheme" (pp.8-9). In Holland it is "the ideas behind the structural map, and not the map itself, which will determine the Government's physical planning policy" (Idenberg, 1971, p.54): but in Britain, there is no such map, plan or policy, and the ideas often seem correspondingly lacking.

#### Denmark

In its survey 'Danish National Planning', the Secretariat of the National Planning Committee (1972) emphasised that although national planning had no legal basis in Denmark, the Government was conscious of the need that "physical planning become integrated into the functions of society" at all levels (p.92). Denmark is therefore "aiming at strengthening physical planning at the national and regional level in connection with economic planning" (p.93) and its efforts to provide machinery for comprehensive macro physical planning bear examination in relation to the British scene.

The substantive background to the Danish approach has similarities to Britain and procedurally physical planning has operated at local level since 1938. However, following rapid socio-economic developments in the late 1950s and a wider recognition of the need for comprehensiveness, national planning became the focus of interest. Accordingly the Government sought methods of "laying down more certain guidelines for the direction of public investments of major importance to the location of industries and to future urbanisation" (p.47). The National Planning Committee, formed in



1961, produced The National Zoning Plan of 1962 - a national plan for land use (Figure 9.18). This plan recognised the need for regional planning and proposed "the division of the country into areas of importance to urban and industrial development respectively, to agriculture, country cottage development and preservation", but it left open the question as to how growth areas should be selected. It merely established guidelines, was not legally binding and "was to serve the educational purpose of illustrating the requirements of future development, thus creating a proper understanding of national planning problems" (p.48). Yet, despite great public interest in the plan, Government sectoral planning continued largely unco-ordinated.

The Town and Country Planning Act, 1969, brought more flexibility to national land use control. A first step was the Green Zoning Plan "defining the recreational potentialities of landscape and coasts in relation to population concentrations and the traffic system [as] part of a comprehensive national land use plan" which would also deal with other major facets of the environment (pp.68-69) to produce "a planning framework for all private and public activities requiring land and the use of national resources", related to every sub-national level of planning activity. And since the proper allocation of finance and investment requires that "economic and physical national planning must ... be carried out as closely integrated activities ... an extension of the overall planning for land use is called for" (pp.76-77). Also, to enable regional assistance to operate as part of a macro comprehensive location/public investment policy, effective regional planning would be a prerequisite to the designation of development centres in the regions, having regard to the needs of the nation as a whole.

Thus, we find in Denmark a situation relevant to the development of an indicative national physical planning model for Britain. The Government, concerned with socio-economic problems, set up a planning committee of ministers and, within a long-range economic context, introduced perspective planning to establish a basis for, inter alia, "a balanced utilisation of





Figure 9.18 Denmark: The National Zoning Plan, 1962

Source: Danish Government (1972)



national labour and land resources [because] just as physical planning cannot be isolated from economic planning, the latter cannot dispense with the former" (pp.93-94). It is important "that decisions are made on land use, on the efficiency of the urban system, on the improvement of transportation services and other matters coming within the field of experience of physical planners [and] it follows that an intensification of national physical planning will be necessary" (p.94).

Danish national planning therefore aims to provide co-ordination of location decisions, both within sectors and between regions. More specifically, in relation to regional planning, it would seek to establish guidelines, to secure compatibility of plans with each other and with national objectives, and to consider alternative strategies. To these ends the Government envisages a need for "overall plans for the use of the national area ... and for a public location policy" (p.97): it also considers that it is "one of its most important duties to keep the general public informed of the work which is being carried out" (p.5).

#### Brazil

An interesting example from a developing country, which sees urban planning as a function of national government, is offered by Brazil (Juppenlatz, 1972a). Here, problems of local planning "led the government to examine whether the existing infrastructure layout and the urban settlement pattern across the country were providing the best facilities for the development of the nation as a whole" (Juppenlatz, 1972b, p.8). The response clearly underlines the importance which the Brazilian government attaches to physical planning vis-à-vis socio-economic factors.

Brazil is experiencing an extensive shift of population from the countryside to metropolitan areas as the rural poor seek better opportunities: these locational trends, including an expected increase from 13M in 1970 to 40M by 1990 in the S.E. Metropolitan region and a void hinterland, are shown in Figure 9.19A. Employment could not be created to match this scale and



## A. Major population/urbanisation trends



## B. Concept of a new national infrastructure



Figure 9.19 Brazil: Some national planning issues

Source: Juppenlatz (1972b)



pattern of urban growth, and further development of existing urban concentrations would both increase congestion and prejudice optimising the allocation of resources. Instead, "a national urbanisation programme by which the urban fabric could be extended throughout the hinterland, opening up new areas ... and changing the potential market of the hinterland into an effective one" was needed: the Government therefore devised, adopted and are implementing, a strategy (Figure 9.19B) "based on an analysis of settlement capacity throughout the whole country" (p.9). This is designed to achieve a more balanced pattern of urbanisation by developing a new physical infrastructure including growth points, river transit facilities, roads and airports - an approach which might usefully be applied with greater directness in Britain.

### Israel

A review of national physical planning approaches would hardly be complete without some reference to Israel. This state, created as recently as 1948, saw the need to establish a system for the comprehensive planning of its national territory with respect to the use and development of the physical environment (Dash and Efrat, 1964). Particularly relevant to our concept of a British model is the co-ordinated way in which organisation for physical planning is structured in an integrated and legally based operational framework spanning macro to micro levels. The principal spatial components of this system are national planning; district/regional planning; and local/detailed planning.

At macro level 'the National Plans' aim "to describe the proposed location of every development against the background of what already exists. They further illustrate each aspect in relation to other connected topics ... and give an overall view of ... the country's development as a whole", and, although not legally binding, are "worked out in co-operation with other government departments and are the authoritative plans for subsequent execution" (p.25). They deal with six main aspects: regions of priority for



directed development; planning units and town systems; communications network; economic and social functions of towns; location of industry; and parks and nature reserves. There is nothing equivalent to the Dutch structural map, but the National Plans compare with the structural outlines and offer a coherent policy 'bundle' well in advance of Britain's ad hoc approach to town planning at macro scale.

Our main conclusions from this review of national physical planning approaches, at home and abroad, are that:-

- (a) the British government has made only marginal attempts in the direction of a coherent, unitary approach to town planning at macro level and appears to discount the need for an overall strategy with respect to the country's physical structuring, and hence for a policy instrument such as an indicative national physical plan;
- (b) comprehensive physical planning at national scale, whether approached through a town planning, economic planning or any other framework, is considered important in the experience of a number of visionary observers, of sub-national planning agencies at home, and of various countries abroad;
- (c) overseas countries offer models for national physical planning (processes, agencies and policy instruments) from which Britain might usefully learn;
- (d) as an element in a country's political/technical/management/decision-making system, the macro level of comprehensive physical planning cannot easily be ignored or subsumed;
- (e) integration of the policy-/plan-making process between national, regional and local levels is an important element in national town planning systems and this requires that the national level plays its full part;
- (f) although the emphasis in macro scale town planning may be on policies often expressed in relation to separate component aspects



- of the physical environment, there is a need for these to be expressed in a coherent and co-ordinated 'bundle' or plan;
- (g) such a plan is necessary to articulate national land use and development policy, and relevant elements of other national policies affecting land use, in the more specific form of proposals and a macro strategic framework;
  - (h) goals, objectives and alternative futures require consideration at national level, as at any other, and their formulation should be part of an iterative process between this and sub-national levels, notably regional;
  - (i) physical planning is inseparable from economic planning, resource allocation and corporate management processes at national level;
  - (j) national physical planning is necessary both to provide sub-national context at home and a basis for supra-national relations abroad;
  - (k) the approach to such planning must be flexible, not rigid, and the plan must therefore take indicative, not blueprint, form;
  - (l) the general public should be informed of all major problems, issues and proposals in the field of national physical planning;
  - (m) considerable political, technical and procedural difficulties are likely to be encountered in any attempt to introduce indicative national physical planning in Britain, even informally; and
  - (n) with regard to the substantive components of an indicative national physical plan there is general agreement that these revolve around the macro land use requirements of national activity and communication systems, including the major structuring of patterns of settlement, industrialisation, agriculture, recreation and transport.

The manner in which our case studies have contributed to this analysis is summarised in Table 9.3.







TOWARDS A POLICY INSTRUMENT

In this chapter we attempt to show how our concept of macro town planning as a policy instrument pursuing resource objectives in the physical environment might be implemented: first, we review the background to and aims of an indicative national physical plan for Britain (Section A); we then postulate an instrumental framework for the plan's realisation (Section B); and, finally, we suggest a plan format (Section C).

As the Planning Advisory Group (1965) advocated a return to the spirit of the 1947 Bill, so we propose a return to the basic national thinking of the early 1940s and its development and application. We consider, as does Bertram M. Cross (1967) from an economic standpoint in 'Action under Planning', how we might secure a more coherent approach to national physical planning issues within the British town planning system through, as Hall (1973, 2, p.36) has put it, "producing a design in physical form". It is not, however, our aim to make definitive proposals as to the precise nature of an indicative national physical plan, but rather to offer a basis for further discussion.

A. BACKGROUND AND AIMS

We consider here indicative national physical planning in terms of issues, its likely 'planning environment' and its substantive and procedural aims.

Some national physical planning issues

Our hypothesis has suggested that the synoptic, integrative, analytical and prescriptive approach of town planning in respect of the use and development of land is needed as much at national scale as at any other, and that there are certain issues with which it should specifically deal.

Thus it would be necessary to consider, inter alia, what settlement pattern will best serve the national interest in terms of socio-economic satisfaction in relation to the use and allocation of resources. Is it, for



instance, of national significance - and, if so, to what extent - that smaller towns are relatively more prodigal of land, but more economic in road construction and operating costs, than larger settlements? Is the lack of correlation between certain large scale recreational areas, and major concentrations of potential users, of national importance? - is it to be ignored or to be tackled, and if so, how? - by creating cities near remote areas or by creating 'environmental areas' near cities? Is our fuel policy sufficiently positive to enable petro-chemical complexes to be regarded as stable growth poles; to arrest decline in mining areas; to offer reasonable guarantees that a new town in, say, northern Scotland created by this generation will not become a special development area of the next; and to justify massive investments in this or that transport infrastructure upon which, in turn, the viability of settlements will depend? To what extent should inter-city and freightliner rail policies reflect and/or determine large scale developments? What alternative patterns of urbanisation are available to us, and how do they relate to transport modes, water supply, conservation of rural resources, reduction of pollution and a European outlook? What is the real importance of Maplin or the Channel Tunnel if such massive projects are so susceptible to political whims?

This does not purport to be a comprehensive list of issues for national planning, but rather a representative view of the kind and scale of matters where physical aspects, and their proper resolution, are of nationwide concern: these, and many other matters, seem to call for a more unitary national town planning approach and for the guidance of an indicative national physical plan.

#### The planning environment

Any planning model will be the outcome of its planning environment (Chapter 2): therefore, to have validity, an indicative national physical plan must be both demanded by and appropriate to the needs of the planning environment in which it will operate, and we begin by making certain assumptions about this environment.



It is assumed that society will become more insistent upon fulfilment of the basic socio-economic human needs perceived by Keynes (1972, p.326) - "those needs which are absolute ... and those which are relative in the sense that ... their satisfaction lifts us above ... our fellows". We assume that these needs will be reflected in a continuing pressure on central government, emphasised by fluid social, economic and political situations. We also assume that the British approach to their attainment will favour continued application of planning philosophy generally, including town planning specifically, with an enhanced role for intervention at macro scale (Wilson, 1970; 1973). These assumptions presuppose that, although changing values in an unstable society may lead to greater direction and pace of change, there will be no drastic upheaval in government: in other words that the free market economy, but with (perhaps paradoxically) a growing amount of both devolution and interventionist central influence, will persist. Such a scenario is supported by the view that "a system so complex as a Western nation state cannot regulate itself simply by the spontaneous, mutual adjustment of individuals. Only a complete set of institutions, with their associated role systems and powers of direction and control could support even the present unstable order. These will surely have to play a larger part in the further regulation of these societies" (Vickers, 1972, p.133) and it is further supposed "that all parties involved would rather agree than fight [although this] is becoming increasingly unrealistic" (p.152). But as Hall (1974, p.635) advises, "we should face the possibility that deepening economic crisis would lead to a political transformation in western countries, with the establishment of regimes devoted to radical changes in society - involving perhaps mass redistribution of income and wealth, severe curbs on personal consumption, and a general stress on collective effort and performance".

We thus anticipate the possibility of considerable modification in political, administrative and institutional structures. The Maud Commission (1969) represented substantially new attitudes towards local government



directly, and towards central government indirectly. Many of these changes have received expression in the 1974 local government reorganisation. Others have been echoed and developed by the Kilbrandon Commission (1973) which responds to problems of change in, and dissatisfaction with, government. The Commission's proposals for institutional reform include greater democratisation by devolution/regionalism, and we assume that, in due course, there is likely to be action along these lines and consistent with the precept "that if government in the United Kingdom is to meet the present-day needs of the people it is necessary for the individual sovereignty of Parliament to be maintained [as only thus] is it likely that there will emerge the degree of unity, co-operation and flexibility which common sense suggests is desirable" (para.539).

Such a planning environment would, we suggest, both require, and be conducive to, an important role for town planning at national scale:<sup>1</sup> for this, as we have seen (Chapter 9), there are persuasive theoretical arguments and ample practical precedents such as those of Rau and of the Dutch planning system respectively. Its public policy characteristics would depend upon the political/institutional response to prevailing substantive problems and needs as affected by the dynamics of change. For example, at the time of the 1968 Act the issues were seen by the then Minister as devolution from Whitehall, a more creative approach to problems of the environment, public participation and harnessing public interest in seeking improved environmental conditions through realism and resource planning which recognises the inevitability of growth. This, said the Minister must be planned for "in a coherent and economic way" by a new system that enables central government "to attack the general problems of national and strategic importance" (Greenwood, 1968, pp.258-259). Indeed it is hard to envisage a situation in which town planning could ignore the question of national strategy.

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<sup>1</sup>The main issues about the process itself will be (a) goals; (b) conflict resolution; (c) communication; and (d) participation (Wilson, 1970, p.83).



In support of its theme of information/participation/representation the Skeffington Committee (1969, para.253) concludes that "a better knowledge of planning is necessary".<sup>1</sup> Public involvement would not, however, be easy to achieve in respect of macro scale planning, and, initially, could probably represent no more than an "informing degree of tokenism" on a ladder of citizen participation (Arnstein, 1971).<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, if there is to be a meaningful dialogue between 'planners' and 'planned' in which a responsive and diffused elite contribute to the decision-making process, the public will need to be informed about national as well as local planning matters (Styles, 1971). An indicative national physical plan could play an important role: it would acquaint people<sup>3</sup> with central Government's attitudes and intentions on national issues and, in so doing, force the Government to clarify its own ideas. If Schon's Law can be overcome, and existential knowing developed (Chapter 6), we see such a plan as a key instrument in securing effective centre-periphery relationships in the national interest.

#### The substantive aim

An indicative national physical plan would be only one policy instrument dealing with one facet of the national entity in a wider corporate system dealing through many institutional processes with the whole gamut of the country's affairs. Its substantive focus would be largely those matters identified as traditionally the concern of British town planning in Chapter 3, conceptualised in the Le Play model in Chapter 6 and outlined in Chapter 8.

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. the Danish approach (Chapter 9).

<sup>2</sup>The White Paper 'Roads for the Future' (M.O.T., 1970, para.9) claimed that "public response to the Green Paper was excellent. Comments were received from nearly 300 organisations and individuals". However representative these respondents were, the assessment of "excellent" seems a little optimistic in a national context!

<sup>3</sup>We disagree with Heap (1961, p.80) that "people will better understand and accept the principles of town planning control over the use of land if we avoid ... something in the nature of a National Master Plan", provided that such a plan is 'indicative' rather than 'master' and that it does not "put the whole concept of planning control into a rarified, unrealistic atmosphere in which it would appear too clever to be understood by simple folk".



But, as Peter Willmott (1973) points out, these need to be seen in a broadening situation<sup>1</sup> where "ultimate judgements about policies must be made in terms not just of tidy land use or the success of transport or relocation policies, but of the consequences of these and much more for people's 'quality of life'" (p.13). Against an expanding conception of its traditional land use base, future tasks for town planning<sup>2</sup> might include the problem of accommodating the consequences of affluence based on, say, the "dispersed city [which] raises a question about national policy for the distribution of population, employment, and investment between different regions" (p.15); development of alternative forms of dispersal, concentration and transport; "the right regional and national policies" (p.22) with regard to congested urban cores; and fundamental issues regarding distribution of opportunities.

The substantive aim would, therefore, be to create, in relation to this focus, the best spatial arrangements for facilitating activities in terms of their accommodation in the physical environment as exemplified by the Foley and Wilson models (Chapter 6) in the spirit that "by changing the physical and locational environments at the places in which families live out their lives and in which groups conduct their business, the lives and the businesses can be improved" (Webber, 1964a, pp.84-85). It would seek the best physical basis for the realisation of fundamental national aims: for example 'The National Plan' (D.E.A., 1965, p.1) prescribed economic growth as essential "if we are to achieve all our objectives of social justice and welfare, of rising standards of living, of better social capital and of a full life for all in a pleasant environment". But it is important, as Peter Cowan and Derek Diamond (1970, p.201) point out, to appreciate what we can plan for, and what is beyond our grasp. Major plannable issues at macro level might include

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<sup>1</sup> Demanding a better understanding by planners of interdependencies; policy consequences; market forces; the environment; and participation.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. James (1964, pp.6-10): 'The next fifty years' posed four problems - economic/technological trends; population (including new distribution); leisure; and traffic. For further discussion on this theme see James (1967), Ling (1968), and Cowan (1970).



the physical conditions required for, inter alia, population changes (D.O.E., 1971); industrial mobility to support these changes (Keeble, 1971); increasing social and physical mobility (Willmott, 1970); and integrated communications and power supplies to serve these activities (M.O.T., 1966; M.O.P., 1967; M.O.T., 1970; S.S.T.I., 1972). There will obviously be extensive new physical developments, but there is no certainty as to what spatial patterns will result (Cowan and Diamond, 1971, p.204) and we must use this design opportunity to maximum effect (Stone, 1967) within resource constraints in respect of land, existing built environment and finance.<sup>1</sup>

This is no more than informal, if informed, speculation: it would be the prime task of an indicative national physical plan, officially, to consider and propose a policy/strategy designed to facilitate such matters in the light of needs and priorities, which in turn would depend on clarification of national goals and objectives. Our task is to suggest how a macro physical planning model might be developed for dealing with nationwide aspects of issues like relating people to work/recreation and matching infrastructure to activities.<sup>2</sup>

#### The procedural aim

For the reasons suggested in previous chapters, we believe that, procedurally, an indicative national physical plan could help to provide an informed and action oriented perspective on town planning aspects of national resource

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<sup>1</sup> Because of resource constraints and its adaptability, the existing pattern of urbanisation could well persist, with accretions to it based on the city regional theme (S.E.E.P.C., 1967, para.1.6), increasingly dispersed in character and with major re-shaping in the form of radial and linear extensions based on high speed communications (e.g. London - Northampton, Birmingham - Hereford). The megalopolitan growth of the axial belt (including related growth on the Severn, Solent and Humber) is likely to continue, with intense and diverse communications networks: the pattern is completed by major 'outliers' (Central Scotland, Tyne-Tees); a number of free-standing cities; rural areas providing large scale recreational space; and the whole characterised by a high level of inter-regional, national and supra-national interaction (Cowan and Diamond, 1971, pp.204-207).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the approaches used in Strategic Plan for the South East and Brazilian models (Chapter 9).



utilisation and development (Chapter 5). It would seek to anticipate, propose and guide means of responding to the physical consequences of social and economic changes (Chapter 8), aiming to remedy some of the macro level deficiencies in the British system such as non-articulation of goals/objectives and lack of a coherent policy framework (Chapters 3, 4 and 9). Such a plan would, therefore, be concerned - as argued through the Foley, systems, Schon and Wilson models (Chapter 6) - with the recognition and application at national scale of the physical dimension as an inevitable concomitant of town planning's public policy role in relation to resource objectives.<sup>1</sup>

We envisage that national physical planning, as a public policy instrument, would be geared towards facilitating the organisation and functioning of the physical system, adopting a nationwide view. It would take its place within the corpus of evolving operational frameworks, methodologies and techniques (Chapter 7) and we conceptualise its position in relation to the British town planning process/system, and to its wider corporate planning context, in Figure 10.1. Thus town planning at macro scale is seen as part of a system of national corporate planning. As Amos (1971) says, "since many of the activities and objectives of central government are the counterparts of those in local government, it may be argued that the same hierarchical system and the same classes of operation are applicable" (p.306). Therefore, "at both regional and national level the physical planner should make a similar contribution to corporate management and resource allocation as he currently does in some units of local government" (p.307) so that national scale planning forms part of an integrated decision model (Boudeville, 1968, pp.75-77).

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<sup>1</sup>This is what the French Government was attempting in its definition of *métropoles régionales* as a basis for a national urban network, and we foresee the development in Britain of a centralist model along the lines of the established French and Dutch models and that emerging in Denmark (Chapter 9).



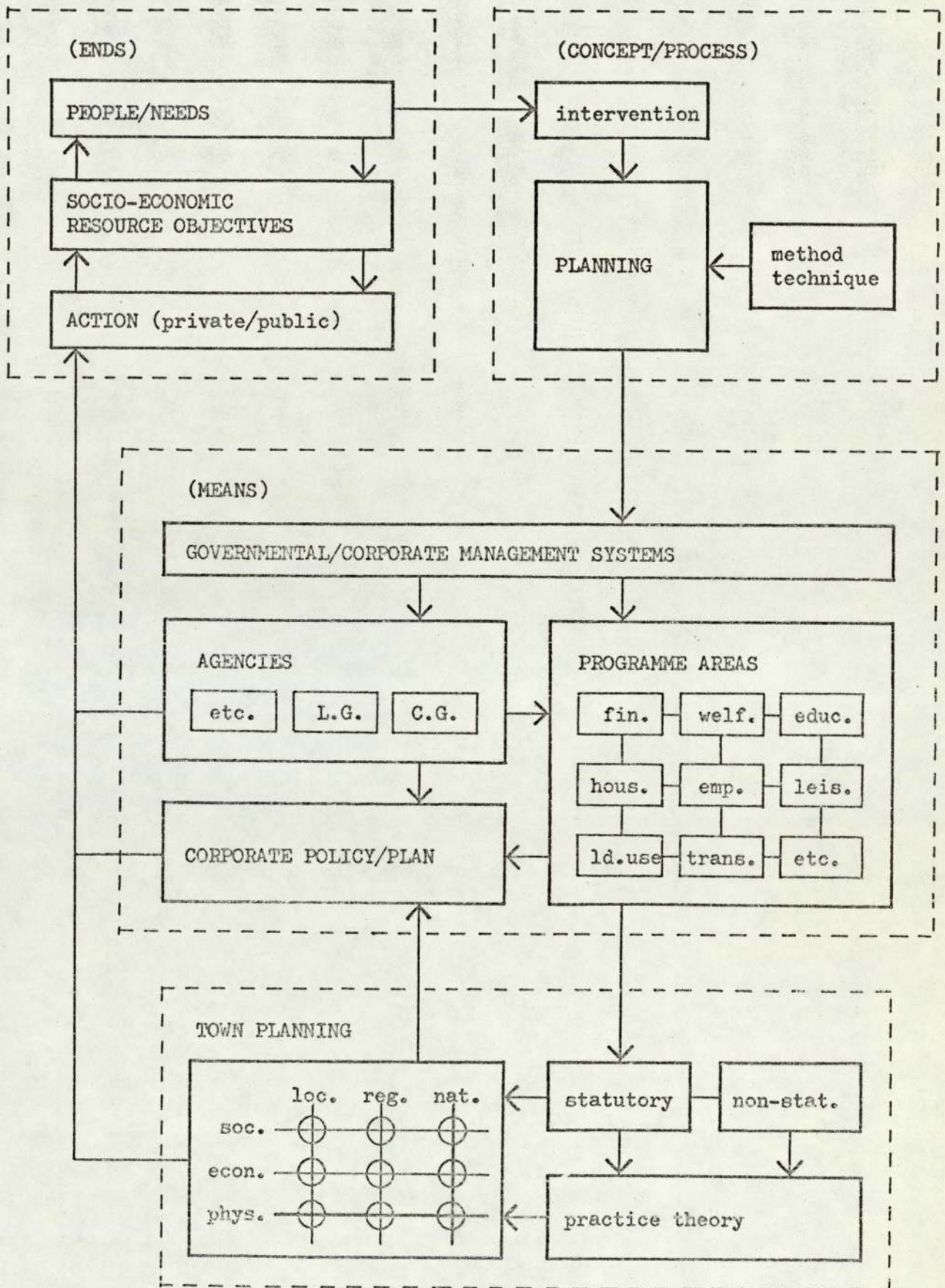


Figure 10.1 A conceptual view of British town planning

Source: original



The procedural aim, then, would be the provision of a public policy instrument which would articulate national town planning goals/objectives, bring together aspects of other national policies significant for the use of land, and outline, in a policy/plan document, the ways in which the macro physical environment might best be designed to serve national socio-economic interests through effective resource utilisation. The plan would, through a comprehensive 'bundle' of policies and proposals, indicate a national strategic framework for the country's future development.<sup>1</sup> It would provide, on the one hand, a context for all related activities at regional and local scales, and, on the other, a positive stance and direction in supra-national relationships. The plan should be co-ordinate with the wider setting of, for example, E.E.C. abroad, while at home it should take account of the fact that the need for a coherent national view has been extensively advocated (Chapters 5 and 9). It should, in fact, give expression to the idea "that the government's chief function is to 'hold the ring' between regions (and, for that matter, areas larger or smaller than regions in any accepted geographical sense), to compensate for lack of resources and opportunities in some places by redistributing a surplus of resources and opportunities which are to be found in other places, but always with an eye to the growth of both in the country as a whole" (Kilbrandon Commission, 1973, para.1069).

Regionalisation would, of course, be a key feature of an indicative national physical planning model in the co-ordination and reconciliation of national and regional interactions. This concept (and its likely substantive physical elements and practical applications) has been discussed (Chapters 7, 8 and 9), but we do not make specific suggestions for its realisation. We recognise, however, that it involves an extremely complex technical/political process and would expect it to emerge as part of a strong threefold national/regional/local organisation based on the existing British system and having regard to the Kilbrandon recommendations, the theories of Hermansen (1970) and the experience of French and Dutch planning.

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. the structural scheme for the Netherlands and the Israel physical master plan (Chapter 9).



The plan would provide a vehicle for the identification, understanding and tackling of the national situation and its particular problems. It would, initially at least, only pursue modest objectives, bearing in mind the cautionary advice of the G.D.L.P. Inquiry Panel: it would, although taking the form of a 'plan', primarily act as a catalyst around which ideas could be generated, discussed and tested. To this end it would have three primary roles - to inform, to propose, to co-ordinate. It should, through a balanced, synoptic overview, avert such dangers as that "of physical planning being determined by a one-sided approach based on the 'roads first' philosophy" (Goss, 1969, p.258) and would be entirely indicative in nature as conceived in the Netherlands physical planning system (Chapter 9).

#### B. THE INSTRUMENTAL FRAMEWORK

In this section we outline the general framework of practice theory, operational machinery and methodological approach envisaged for our proposed plan.

##### A practice theory of indicative national physical planning?

We consider that an indicative national physical plan might well develop along lines suggested by W. D. C. Lyddon (1971, p.302): "our so-called framework therefore should be composed of a series of indicators or measures, perhaps we should call them charts of the future requirements, possibilities and intentions, which can be brought together when required in order to help with the allocation of resources as between one region and another. On the one hand this is process rather than plan, a method of working rather than a framework, which is unlikely in itself to produce a single document which could be published. On the other hand 'a plan' at national scale can be envisaged which is an overall demonstration of a range of possible changes, looking well ahead to the future. With this, the direction in which more immediate proposals may lead can be assessed and influenced". We support this summary of the practical task with three theoretical examples which amplify those discussed in Chapter 2 and offer a conceptual basis for the development of procedural machinery.



First, the middle range bridge for comprehensive planning proposed by Martin Meyerson (1956) embraces the major functions which might be expected of an indicative national physical plan: central intelligence; pulse-taking; policy clarification; development plan; and feed-back/review (pp.130-131). Second, the mixed scanning concept of A. Etzioni (1967) offers a compromise between rational and incremental approaches with their high and low degree control characteristics. It hinges upon data collection and strategy formulation related to perceived needs: "the strategy combines a detailed ('rationalistic') examination of some sectors<sup>1</sup> - which, unlike the exhaustive examination of the entire area, is feasible - with a 'truncated' review of other sectors" (p.224). Third, any national plans will inevitably be involved with the goals of comprehensive planning, as discussed by Alan Altshuler (1965), and its functions - the creation of a plan, the evaluation of proposals in the light of the plan, and the co-ordination of agencies to secure that proposals reinforce each other in the public interest (p.193). This implies that "various collective goals can somehow be measured at least roughly ... and welded into a single hierarchy of community objectives" (p.194) but it "will have little affect ... unless their goal premises can be established in sufficiently compelling fashion ... to make politicians take notice" (p.209).

Thus we would expect that an indicative national physical plan would, inter alia, (a) perceive the national environment; (b) define the desired changes; and (c) design the means of achieving these (Ozbekhan, 1969, p.152). The plan should, as far as possible, reconcile the different aspirations of problem solving and utopian planning, of incrementalism and comprehensiveness, of pluralism and rationality, of process-approach flexibility and blueprint stability. It would do this by combining adaptive elements within its unitary approach: thus its primary role as a long term strategic planning instrument (dealing with, for example, major spatial patterning of settlement and communications) would be supported by a secondary short term tactical function (for example, environmental aid programmes).

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. the process of investigation by Royal Commissions and Committees.



An agency for indicative national physical planning

Any national plan would obviously require effective machinery to operationalise it (Chapter 7). Difficulty was experienced at the time of the 1943 Act in establishing suitable institutional mechanisms for town planning (Chapters 3 and 4): would not an advisory, non-departmental Minister lack the necessary status and power? - would not a Minister with far reaching powers intrude upon the autonomy of other departments? In the event, town planning was given a fairly limited role, often finding itself denied in critical areas. The Department of the Environment has, in theory, brought wider perspectives and greater coherence to the traditional central land use planning machine, but it would be unrealistic to press the unitary philosophy too far.

We consider, therefore, that an agency for indicative national physical planning should have a comprehensive but advisory role, operating through a reticulist approach: it should aim to guide and co-ordinate by exerting a firm yet flexible and persuasive rather than directive attitude, working in close collaboration with other Government departments, particularly in the economic planning field.

The Barlow, Scott and Uthwatt Reports agreed in principle that a central planning authority was required, but opinions differed as to what form it should take (Chapter 4). As a means of effecting the approach which we have outlined we are impressed by the view of the Uthwatt Committee (1942) that "it would be a mistake if there were created a Government Department ... which would rank with existing Government Departments. What is wanted is thought at the centre, informed vision, unified control of land use and co-ordination between the existing Departments" under a Minister who "should have no departmental cares but ... the advantage of a highly qualified staff informed as to the ... conditions and needs of the country, competent to put forward proposals for consideration and to advise ... (para.362). The broad principles of policy would ... be settled by the Cabinet after consideration by a Committee of Ministers [responsible for] the making of schemes necessary to



carry out that policy ..." (para.363). Administration would be exercised through a Commission over which Parliamentary control would be achieved by Ministerial directives (para.365). We advocate something very similar.

Duties of such a 'commission', 'bureau' or 'agency' (our preferred term) for indicative national physical planning might, as suggested in the Scott Report (1942, para.221), include national research and inquiry, policy-/plan-formulation at national scale, co-ordination of national and regional planning and 'approval' of sub-national scale development plans.<sup>1</sup> We envisage that the agency would fulfil a similar function to that of the C.G.P. in France, including also the functions of the D.A.T.A.R. and C.N.A.T. (Chapter 9). A model of the possible organisation and relationships of the agency is suggested in Figure 10.2. In respect of its specific plan-making function such an agency would fulfil a guiding, unifying and integrating role<sup>2</sup>, bringing synoptic overview and comprehensiveness to departmental incrementalism. Here, physical planners "will advise on the effect of changing circumstances, the efficacy of statutory provisions, the proposals of other agencies and the performance of local planning authorities. They should also provide a source of technical information<sup>3</sup>, and advice to local authorities and, on the basis of their knowledge of sub-national physical planning studies, should provide guidance to the central government on the allocation of resources" (Amos, 1971, p.307).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>We suggest a distinction in plan 'approval' procedure whereby structure plans would be 'approved' but regional plans 'agreed' in recognition of the Kilbrandon spirit of devolution. Cf. 'approval' and 'adoption' of structure and local plans.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. the proposal by March (1969, pp.10-12) for three physical planning agencies to deal with transportation and development; heritage; and agriculture, fishing and forestry.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. 'General Information System for Planning' (D.O.E., 1972, para.9.32).

<sup>4</sup>Cf. the idea of an agency for "national regional development policy ... to study the country's economic and population trends; its resource potentials and limitations, the functions, patterns and possibilities of its urban and metropolitan communities, present industrial and agricultural development plans and prospects, and existing transportation and power networks and plans". Its aims might be to devise criteria for development policies and their evaluation; to recommend courses of action; to produce an official policy memorandum for guidance of appropriate bodies; and to prepare an annual report to describe policy and present plans (Rodwin, 1959, p.48).



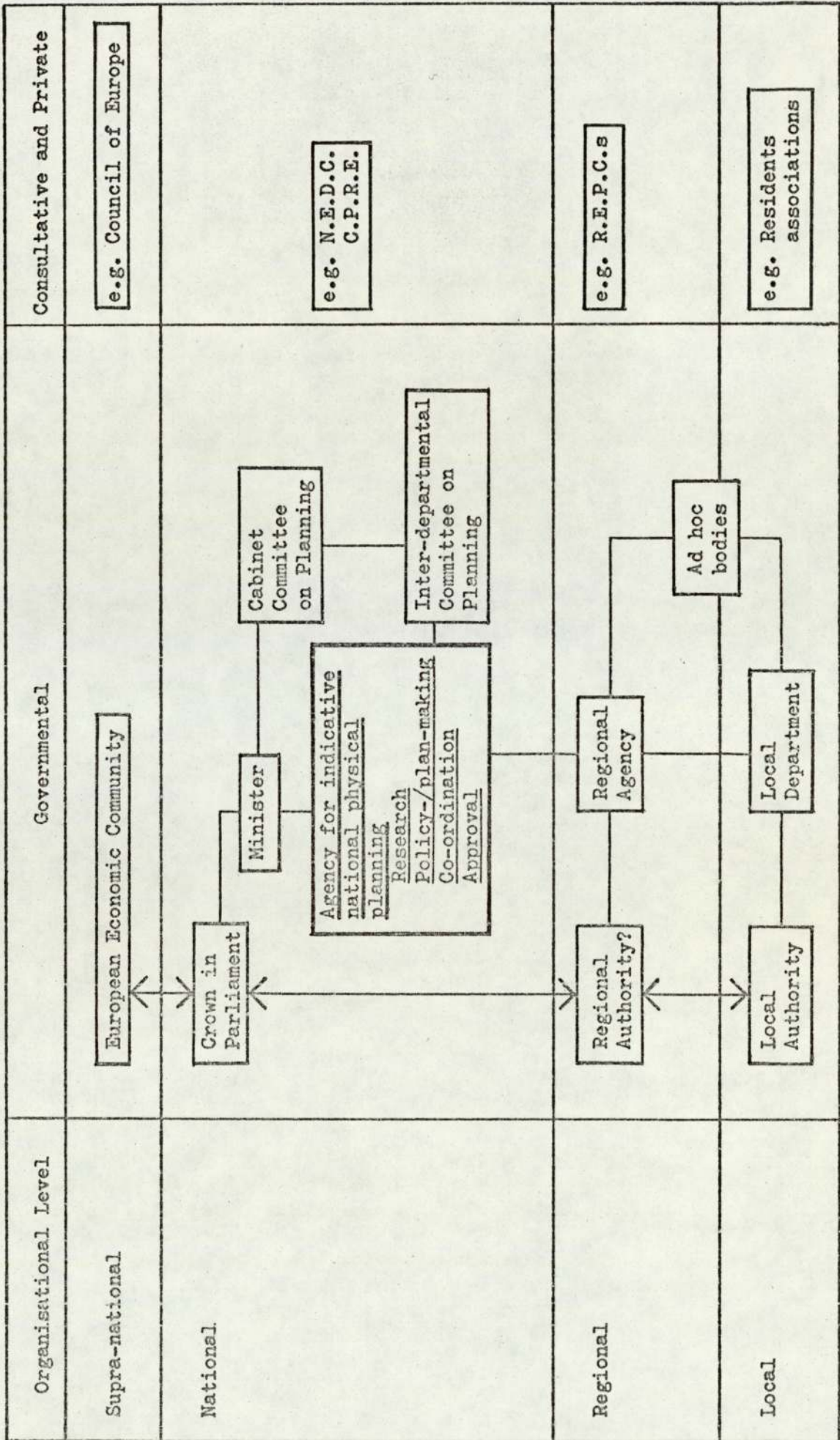


Figure 10.2 A suggested organisation for indicative national physical planning in Britain

Source: original



### An action construct

Bearing in mind the planning environment, the substantive and procedural aims, and the concept of a practice theory of indicative national physical planning, we hypothesise an approach for the national planning agency whereby a 'traditional' planning sequence (for example, Figure 10.3) is applied to tackling the issues for national physical planning identified in Chapter 8.

Accepting that the formulation of goals and objectives<sup>1</sup> (Lichfield, 1968) is necessary to the identification of problems, moving towards their solution and measuring progress made, we suggest that a national corporate plan should establish national goals/objectives along the lines of 'Goals for Americans' or the principal orientations of the French system. Thus, the hitherto vague (often only implicit and oblique) intentions of the Government as found in, for example, various Acts, reports of commissions/committees or white papers, would be expressed positively. Within this wider framework the more specific national goals, objectives and priorities for town planning could then be formulated.<sup>2</sup> The need is obvious because, if national goals are not defined, it would not only be difficult to assess the compatibility of different courses of action with each other, but also the aims of regional plans for their compatibility with the national context.<sup>3</sup> And if we have no national expectations in respect of regional growth, new towns or recreational provision we cannot measure performance.

Equally, British town planning has failed to pay due regard to alternative policies (Foley, 1960). The Department of the Environment (1971) now acknowledges this, though not in a very explicit or action oriented way, and Hall (1973, 2, pp.438-445) draws attention to the need to relate physical

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<sup>1</sup>The distinction is not clear-cut: for example, an objective of a national corporate plan (say, to secure the best use of land in the public interest) might be regarded as a goal in town planning terms.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Strategic Plan for the South East (S.E.J.P.T., 1970, para.9.8).

<sup>3</sup>Are, say, the seven objectives of the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Strategy in line with national policy (Y.H.E.P.C., 1970, para.2)?



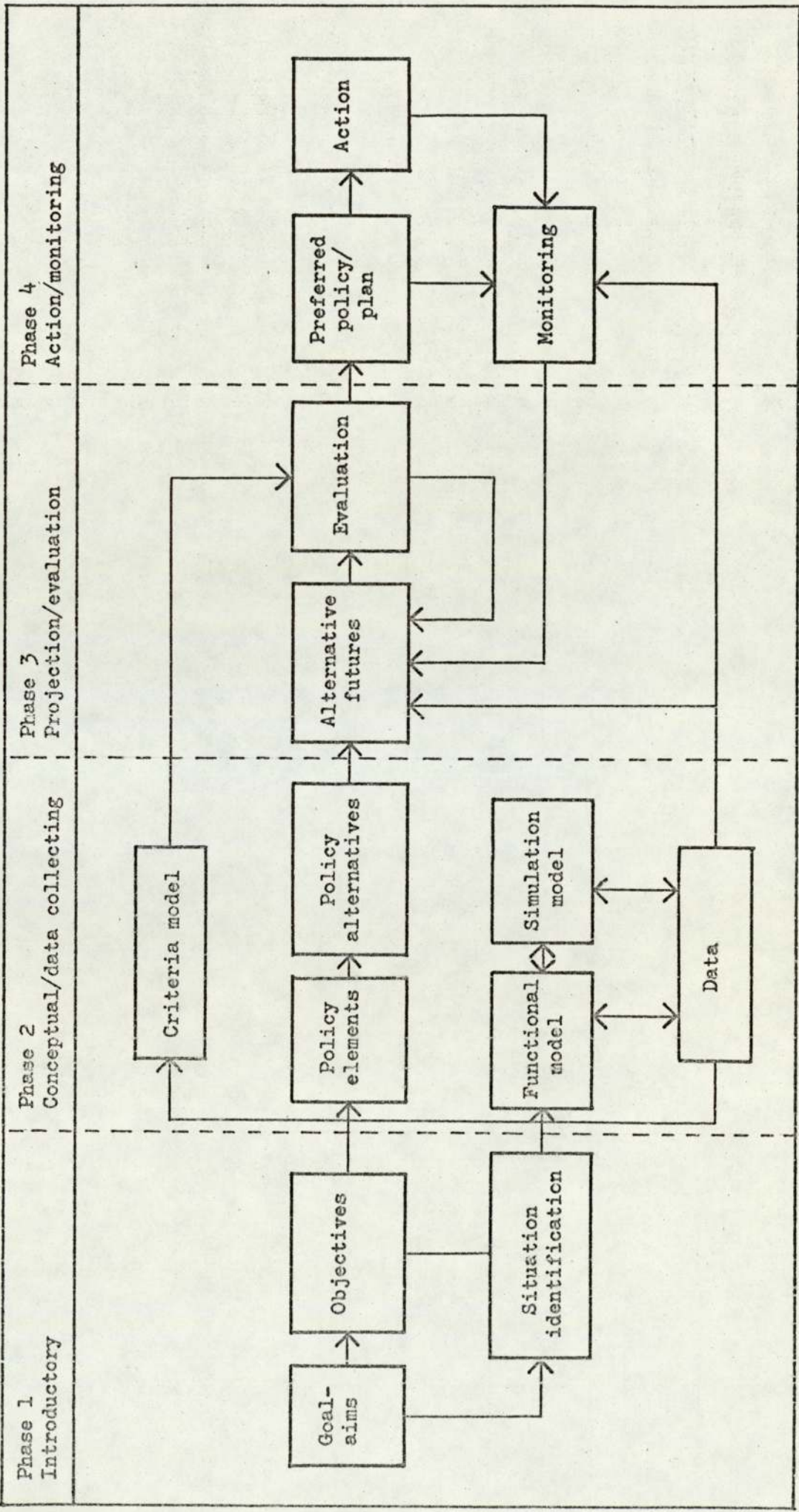


Figure 10.3 An idealised planning process for indicative national physical planning

Source: after Bird (1968)



planning policy objectives/instruments to wider social programmes, regretting the general lack of concern in this field. Hall emphasises the significance of interaction between physical planning alternatives and policy options in close-related areas. Eight such policy areas (each embracing a number of policy choices) and three urban design alternatives (on the basis of people, jobs and urban form) are defined (Table 10.1) and it is then shown how different policy options may relate to various urban forms (Figure 10.4) affecting the style and quality of life. This approach clearly has macro applications.

In the absence of formalised consideration of national alternatives, Britain has never been seriously confronted with macro evaluation: but, "short of a full comparative analysis of alternatives, town planning will presumably continue to be badly split as between judging among competing claims to land" (Foley, 1960, p.90). Attempts to evaluate the implications of the third London airport underlined the deficiencies in techniques where cost/benefit models have serious shortcomings and goals/achievement methods are relatively untried. However, it would seem sensible to test national strategy for internal consistency; locational suitability; conformity to standards and principles; problem solving; feasibility; design; and flexibility and open-endedness (Lichfield, 1970, p.153).

The foregoing considerations presuppose that adequate simulation can be achieved, though in anything as complex as a national system it would not be easy (Chapter 7). However, it must be attempted if we are to pursue the idea of an indicative national physical planning model since no realistic policy/plan could be evolved without a capability for anticipating and forecasting probable future directions for the system on which decisions must be made.

As to the plan itself, we believe that the study has revealed the need for a 'bundle' of policies and proposals to deal specifically with the physical aspect of the national entity as identified in the Foley model



Table 10.1 Policy options and urban forms: A basis for generating alternative strategies

Source: after Hall (1973, 2)

| Alternative policy options | Design alternatives for growth |   |   |                    |   |   |                    |   |   |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|--------------------|---|---|--------------------|---|---|
|                            | Peripheral (large)             |   |   | New/expanded towns |   |   | Peripheral (small) |   |   |
|                            | A                              | B | C | A                  | B | C | A                  | B | C |
| Economic                   |                                |   |   |                    |   |   |                    |   |   |
| Agricultural               |                                |   |   |                    |   |   |                    |   |   |
| Housing                    |                                |   |   |                    |   |   |                    |   |   |
| Land                       |                                |   |   |                    |   |   |                    |   |   |
| Transport                  |                                |   |   |                    |   |   |                    |   |   |
| Technological              |                                |   |   |                    |   |   |                    |   |   |
| Administrative             |                                |   |   |                    |   |   |                    |   |   |
| Employment                 |                                |   |   |                    |   |   |                    |   |   |

A = people

B = jobs

C = urban form

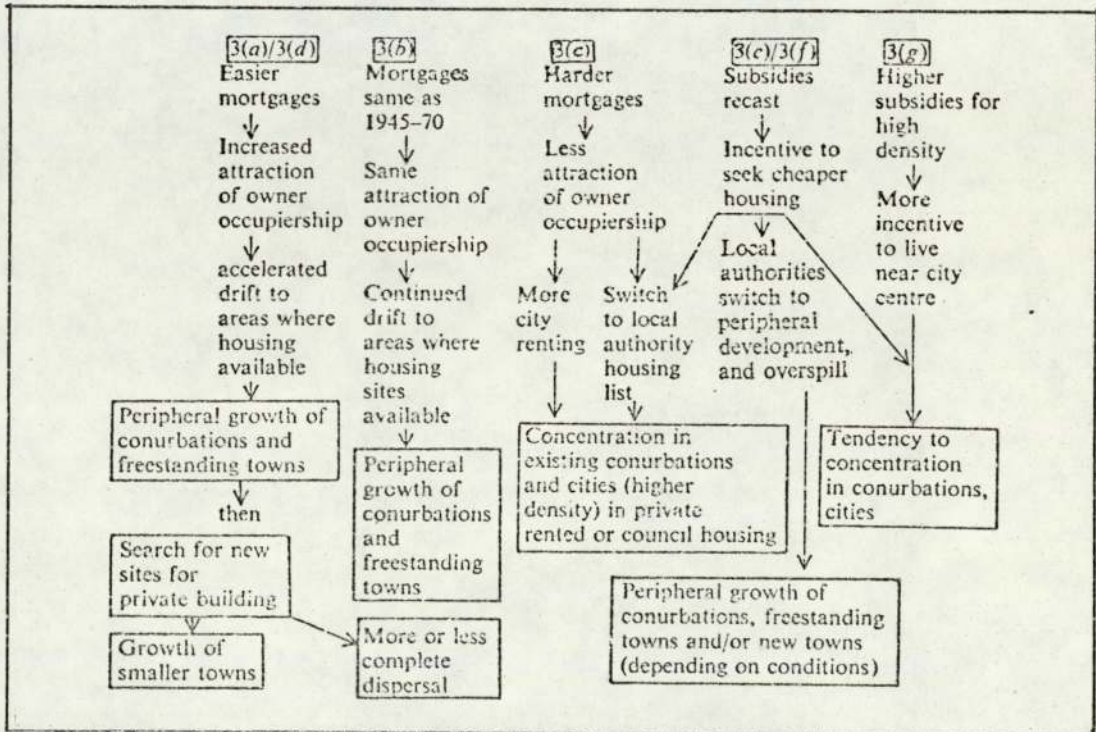


Figure 10.4 Alternative housing policies and urban forms

Source: Hall (1973, 2)



(Chapter 6). Its more precise format is discussed later. However, it should embrace both subject and problem oriented points of view (Burns, 1971, p.311) and, as Goss (1969, p.258) suggests, "it would need to relate major proposals for industrial development, ports, airports, as well as major urban expansion, new and expanded towns and the whole transportation network (road, rail and air) for passengers and freight. It would need to relate regional and sub-regional proposals and determine national priorities".

Finally, such a plan must obviously be iterative and capable of implementation. The importance of feedback and two way relationships between centre and periphery has been widely stressed (Schon, 1970; M.H.L.G., 1970): our national planning model would be no less in need of continuous monitoring and review<sup>1</sup> than any other component of the British statutory system for which D. E. C. Eversley (1966, p.14) advocated a "national information and feedback mechanism" so that relationships between the expected, the desired and the permitted can be fully analysed and provide a reliable basis for decision-making and action. Its implementation would depend on adequate investment planning in public and private sectors; on effective sub-national administration; and on its proposals being realistic in terms of available resources.

### C. THE PLAN

Accepting the need for a macro strategic framework, and attaching considerable importance to the law of requisite variety<sup>2</sup> (Ashby, 1956) as well as recognising its own inherent qualities, we believe that the 1968 Act development planning model embodies many features (Chapter 7) appropriate to the idea of an indicative national physical plan. This forms the basis of the model which we now suggest.

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. the French four year plans.

<sup>2</sup>That a control system, to be effective, must possess the variety of the system which it is seeking to influence.



### Status/function

The plan would relate to the whole of the national territory and would, in amplification of the 1943 Act's mandate, formulate the Government's general views, policy and proposals in respect of the development and other use of land in accordance with aims and objectives which Parliament may specify from time to time. Its purpose, however, like that of the French and Dutch formulations, would be to give flexible guidance, not rigid direction. The plan would be statutory, owing its existence to the 1943 Act and its successor powers, but discretionary in that its provisions would not be legally binding. Nevertheless, it would be expected to command considerable respect so that "a network of reciprocal expectations is established" (Hansen, N. 1968, p.4).<sup>1</sup>

In its concern with broad strategy for national development and the use of resources<sup>2</sup> the plan will be guiding change in the spatial patterning of activity systems and their infrastructure. It therefore carries a heavy social responsibility to ensure effectiveness and efficiency: it must be firm enough to engender confidence in its proposals, yet flexible enough to adapt to evolving situations. Thus it should be "a framework which is tailored to what might be required of it at any point in time ... able to answer those questions we need to ask in order to make some allocation of the financial and spatial resources ..." (Lyddon, 1971, p.301). Its functional tasks would be approached broadly through adapting the 1968 Act structure planning model (Chapter 7) to the particular needs of national scale.

The functions of the plan might include:-

1. Interpreting supra-national situations

Any national strategy would have to be set within an immediate European context and a less immediate, but equally significant, world situation. It would need to consider, for example, what size,

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<sup>1</sup>Its status would be the national equivalent of a non-statutory plan approved by a local planning authority.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. the role of the regional economic planning councils (Chapter 9).



quantity and disposition of major sea/airports and infrastructure would best serve international socio-economic intercourse and what strategies would best meet the needs of the regions while observing E.E.C. obligations.

2. Establishing national aims, policies and proposals

The plan would state national aims and the strategy (including policies and proposals) for their achievement within the framework of the national corporate plan. It would outline the ways in which major patterning of activity systems and social and economic needs would be facilitated by efficient physical structure and good environment.

3. Providing a framework for sub-national planning

Regionalisation would be the keynote: as part of an iterative process, the plan would set the context for regional plans and major projects having regard to the needs of the nation and of the individual regions. It would provide a strategic framework within which more detailed sub-national policies/proposals could be developed and the compatibility of their objectives and claims for resources resolved.

4. Indicating national priority areas

Areas requiring action of an intensive priority nature would be scheduled. These might include special measures to deal with particular problems of, for example, social and economic deprivation, congestion and conservation.

5. Providing national guidance for development control

This would involve establishing policies and standards which, together with the strategy expressed in the plan, would assist the Minister in assessing major projects (such as nuclear power stations and airports) and local planning authorities with control functions.



6. Providing a basis for national co-ordination of decisions

The plan would offer a catalyst for discussion and decision between international bodies, Government departments, public agencies, local authorities and the private sector. It should perform an integrating role among diverse elements.

7. Assisting the national use and allocation of resources

This would involve seeking both the best use and development of the physical environment as a resource and the most effective use and allocation of resources in respect of that environment.

8. Bringing national town planning issues and decisions before the country

The plan would bring the Government's ideas and intentions before official bodies and public alike, creating a greater general awareness of the town planning's national role.

In all its functions the plan would have special regard to the importance of using resources to the best advantage in the national interest. Its proposals should be demonstrably practicable in terms of real and financial resources (public and private) and justifiable in terms of its socio-economic consequences. This would require realistic determination of priorities and the phasing of proposals, both in the short (up to 5 years) and long (20 - 30 years) term, in the light of continuous re-appraisal to ensure that action occurs and resources are available when and where the need is greatest. Goals and objectives would also need to be constantly up-dated and adjusted between national and regional scales.

Form and content

The plan would generally accord with the model as briefly outlined in our action construct earlier in this chapter and with the spirit of the



Development Plans Manual (M.H.L.G., 1970).<sup>1</sup> It would consist of

- (a) a written statement (including a key diagram and other illustrative material as appropriate); and
- (b) such supporting information as might be necessary.

Documentation could easily become over ambitious and self defeating to the concept of an indicative policy instrument. The written statement should therefore be as brief and simple as is consistent with adequate treatment of its subject matter, and since the plan would be subject to constant amendment as it responded to the dynamics of change we suggest a loose leaf format<sup>2</sup> (a psychological safeguard against possible 'master plan' connotations!). We further suggest a summary version in pamphlet form,<sup>3</sup> which would be cheap and readily digestible for the popular market, while for supporting technical material we envisage little demand beyond organisations and practitioners directly concerned.

Our intention is not to propose a detailed model of the likely form and content of the plan but to suggest general principles: accordingly this question is tackled in the same spirit in which Burns (1971) developed the idea of a national strategic framework. In procedural terms, the plan must have regard to the needs of the planning operation at the sub-national scales for which it will provide guidance. The plan, as in the Netherland's system, would be comprehensive but, within its general framework, policy outlines would be produced for individual topic areas as required. We consider that it should deal with such matters as context, existing situation and aims; with reasoning behind and description of the strategy and its

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<sup>1</sup>In guiding change or conservation (para.3.11) the plan must show how, from wider setting (paras.4.4-4.6) and from existing structure (paras.4.7-4.8), aims are established (para.4.11) and a strategy for their realisation formulated (para.3.12), having regard to resources (paras.3.19-3.20) and continuous monitoring and review (paras.3.21-3.22).

<sup>2</sup>Cf. the Encyclopaedia of Planning Law.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. the short versions of 'The National Plan' and 'The United Kingdom and the European Communities'.



policies/proposals; and with any particularised aspects and problems.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the written statement would comprise:-

- (a) the national strategic framework; and
- (b) such aspect/topic studies (e.g. population, recreation, transport) as might be needed to amplify (a).

It would be necessary to develop a model of the substantive matters which the plan would be required to treat (Chapter 8) appropriate both to the national level of operation per se, and to the sub-national levels which must interpret and give effect to macro policy. The kind of relationships involved are shown in a comparative analysis of four models in Table 10.2. This illustrates how the matters with which structure plans are statutorily required to deal (column A) may be expressed in terms of major physical/spatial elements at county structure plan scale (column B) and related to aggregated land use categories suitable for macro analysis (column C) or to the bare essentials of regional strategy (column D). A large measure of correlation is revealed between approaches, both at different scales (columns A, B, C, and D), and in statutory (columns A and B) and non-statutory (columns C and D) situations. We therefore suggest that the plan could be based on the adaptation of the models shown in Table 10.2 which, applied in conjunction with Schedule 1, Part II of the Town and Country Planning (Structure and Local Plan) Regulations 1971 also properly adapted, would be appropriate to the macro scale of resolution.<sup>2</sup>

It would be unrealistic in terms of the aims of the study to try to supplement this brief outline of the procedural approach and format which we envisage for an indicative national physical plan by an attempted simulation of its likely substantive output. However, since our theme has been to stress the physical aspects of town planning at national scale, we conclude by speculating (on the basis of Chapters 8, 9 and 10) the possible substance

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Development Plans Manual (M.H.L.G., 1970, paras.4.4-4.24).

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Abercrombie's outline scheme of national development (Chapter 4) and see Appendix B.



Table 10.2 Substantive content of an indicative national physical plan: Developing a model

Source: original

|  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p>Structure plan policy matters:<br/>Town and Country Planning (Structure and Local Plans) Regulations 1971 (Schedule 1, Part I) (S.I. 1971 No. 1109)</p> | <p>Typical county structure plan key diagram: Development Plans Manual (Figure 1a) (summarised) (M.H.L.G., 1970)</p>                             | <p>Aggregated land use categories for macro analysis: The Containment of Urban England (Table 4.1) (Hall, 1973, 1)</p> | <p>Regional strategy: Strategic Plan for the South East (Figure 35) (S.E.J.P.T., 1970a)</p> |
| <p>Population (i)<br/>Housing (iii)<br/>Shopping (vi)<br/>Education (vii)<br/>Other social and community services (viii)</p>                               | <p>Settlement -<br/>location<br/>size<br/>function (eg employment, port) growth (eg expansion, restraints)<br/>form (eg axial, grouped) etc.</p> | <p>Residential (including commercial land)</p>   | <p>Major growth<br/>Medium growth</p>   |
| <p>Employment (ii)<br/>Industry and commerce (iv)<br/>Utility services (xi)</p>  | <p>Work land</p>   |  |   |
| <p>Transportation (v)</p>  | <p>Communications -<br/>roads<br/>railways<br/>waterways<br/>airports<br/>etc.</p>   | <p>Transport</p>   | <p>Road framework</p>   |
| <p>Recreation and leisure (ix)<br/>Conservation, townscape and landscape (x)</p>   | <p>Landscape and recreation -<br/>national park<br/>area of outstanding natural beauty<br/>recreation centre<br/>etc.</p>                        | <p>Open space</p>  | <p>Environmental area</p>   |
| <p>Any other relevant matters (xii)</p>  | <p>Other items -<br/>mineral working<br/>defence land<br/>action area<br/>etc.</p>   | <p>Specialised agriculture<br/><br/>Other land (basically rural)</p>   | <p>Agricultural area</p>  |



of one of the components of our suggested policy instrument - the key diagram (Figure 10.5). This, as with the Netherlands structural map, would in no sense represent a blueprint plan, but would outline the main policy elements in a desirable national physical structure: it would merely give an idea of possible developments, indicatively.



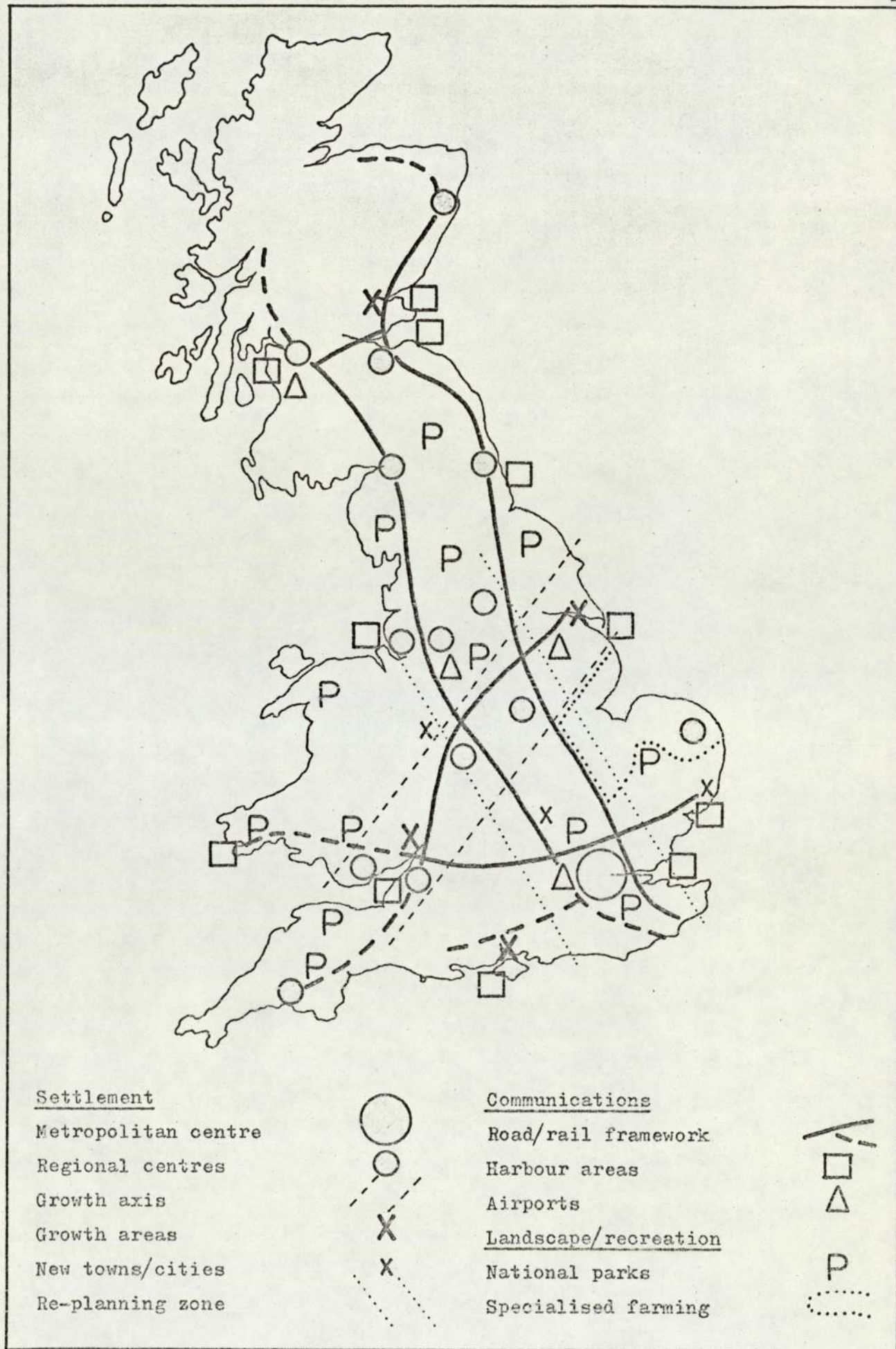


Figure 10.5 Britain: An indicative national physical plan - key diagram  
 Source: original



CONCLUSION

Is an indicative national physical plan for Britain necessary and practicable? The fact that thirty years of statutory town planning in a governmental system exhibiting strong unitary characteristics has not given rise to such a policy instrument could be taken as a clear indication that it is not. However, there has been a marked tendency for the plan-making aspects of British town planning to extend in scope from micro towards macro scale, paralleled by a more formal acknowledgement of the latter. In this evolutionary climate - and having regard to the need for a coherent national strategy as a basis for dealing with supra-national relationships, with context for sub-national activities, with increasing pressures on scarce resources and with growing public concern for physical/spatial problems - it seems that a more positive central approach to town planning, especially if accompanied by the development of corporate planning at national level, might prove to be useful, and perhaps essential.

What then is the significance of trying to establish a national strategic framework? It is chiefly because of the relevance of the physical environment as a resource, and as a user of resources, to the quality of life and the effective functioning of the nation. For example, the importance of communications as a conditioner of, and response to, development patterns has been extensively recognised, this being reflected in the proposals for the major national road network and the heavy financial costs involved. The M1-M6 corridor has served to reinforce patterns of the past, while the road proposals for eastern England and the development of east coast ports are offering the opportunity of new patterns for the future. The size and disposition of settlements will substantially influence the lives of those who live in them, and within the orbit of their regional influence, in terms of the socio-economic benefits they may offer (by way of jobs and services) or the disadvantages



they may engender (such as congestion and pollution). Their patterning will also affect people's potential ability to enjoy rural amenities. If, for instance, the Channel Tunnel is built, and a north-south industrial growth axis developed with a competitor to Europort at its northern end, this could have far-reaching socio-economic implications for the development of those regions which lie astride it, as well as for those which do not. These are the sorts of issues which we consider that it is necessary for an indicative national physical plan to tackle.

In relation to the British town planning system we accordingly reaffirm our contention that it is both illogical and impracticable to underrate the physical dimension at any spatial scale, including national. We further suggest that our hypothesis that a necessary policy instrument in this system should be an indicative national physical plan has found useful support in the arguments of this study. The central concern of indicative national physical planning would therefore be the reconciliation of interplay between resources, physical infrastructure and spatial arrangement in response to human needs, looking at the country as a whole (Figure 1.1). Its potential value seems to be that, in focussing attention in a comprehensive manner on the physical environment in relation to evolving folk-work-place considerations, it should:

- (a) as an information/learning system, tell us what the position is and help us to discover what we might do about it in so far as physical/spatial/environmental matters affect the national entity, now and in the future;
- (b) as a specification for action, enable existing physical infrastructure to be put to best socio-economic use as a resource, and allow future additions and alterations to it to be planned with maximum economy and effectiveness in terms of costs and benefits (tangible and intangible); and
- (c) in the light of (a) and (b) above, provide a more meaningful



context for the town planning operation at regional, structure and local planning scales.

The plan would thus add a new instrumental dimension to the statutory responsibility of central government for "securing consistency and continuity in the framing and execution of a national policy with respect to the use and development of land ...". It would provide a medium through which the Government would have to clarify - and be seen to do so in a structured rather than an ad hoc manner - its intentions for the guidance and control of systemic change in the national physical environment as a whole concerning the way in which major land use patterning and associated movement networks should respond to the functional organisation of activities. Such a plan would, from a resource objective standpoint, deal with national "social, economic and physical systems ... so far as they are subject to planning control or influence" and it would establish, "in effect, the planning framework for ... such matters as the distribution of population, the activities and the relationships between them, the patterns of land use and the development the activities give rise to, together with the network of communications and the systems of utility services" (M.H.L.G., 1970, para.3.6).

This would represent, as our arguments have suggested, a logical development of the existing statutory system compatible with broad interventionist ideologies and practice at various spatial scales within the physical environment, as well as with conceptual/theoretical ideas concerning the role of the macro level in a country's town planning system. Practice theory at national scale is not well developed, but there are methodologies and techniques on which to build, and there are indications that a more coherent macro approach is not only required but quite feasible.

There would, no doubt, be many difficulties, procedural and substantive, in operating an indicative national physical plan. For



example, it would have to beware the criticism that all unitary, comprehensive planning has "tended to be physical in scope, detached from decision-making, and technically and administratively primitive" (Hansen, W., 1968, p.295): furthermore, in the search for enhanced centre-periphery relationships, the "general rule that agencies come into being around problems that are perceived as critical problems and then go on living when those problems have shifted away" (Schon, 1970, p.835) should be avoided. But it also must be remembered that an adaptive, incrementalist approach, "adjusting constantly to the pressures and desires of different groups, through a sensitive political machine" (Hall, 1973, 2, p.70), must have some overall direction and form. Thus, if it combined "realism and pragmatic resolution to provide the means of getting on with the job" (Foley, 1960, p.74), a national plan might also begin to dispel "that nice ambiguity that proclaims that a balanced and orderly arrangement of land uses is in the public interests without committing the government to a pre-statement of just what constitutes this balanced and orderly arrangement" (p.76). At the same time it should uphold "British traditions of democratic representation, fair play, balance and compromise [so that] the control of land use be sensitive to public opinion and to the normal political representation of interests": it should also reject "any long-range, inflexible, or dictatorial plan that would impose some particular set of political leaders' or professional planners' notion of how Britons are to live ..." (p.77).

Nor would any indicative national physical plan looking towards the year 2000 in a macro situation be so very different from its micro counterparts of the early days of British town planning in terms of basic social objectives, namely health and amenity. Thus we would expect macro plan-making to deal, inter alia, with such matters as settlement patterns, urban form and size, location of industry, and advantages of concentration/dispersal from the standpoints of, for example, acceptable



climatic conditions, levels of pollution, standards of safety and impact on conservation: we would expect it to consider the value of, say, a national park to the population of a conurbation in terms of health/amenity benefits which its use confers as against costs which a long, arduous and expensive journey to reach it might involve.

We finish, as we began, with people and planning. Accordingly, we believe that, for information and guidance, central government should produce an indicative national physical plan as a relatively simple advisory and discussion document,<sup>1</sup> statutory but discretionary. We believe that "its real value would be in setting the physical framework, having regard to social and economic objectives and the need to use our land resources as carefully as possible" because, as a former Prime Minister has said "... if we are to build wisely, we have to plan for the future; and this means not only that we have to know more, so as to plan wisely, but that as a nation we have to accept both a broad strategy and the will to follow it through" (Burns, 1971, p.311). And we advocate an indicative national physical plan in the same spirit as one of its leading protagonists, M. Jean Monnet,<sup>2</sup> has supported the European Economic Community - not as a blueprint but as a recognition of reality: only, however, if such a plan withstands empirical testing could our hypothesis be justified.

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<sup>1</sup>The views of the G.L.D.P. Panel of Inquiry (1973, pp. 24-27) on the defects of structure plans, particularly over-ambition, are relevant.

<sup>2</sup>French politician and ex-President of European Coal and Steel Community (B.B.C. Radio, May 1973).



## Appendix A

### A NOTE ON RESEARCH APPROACH

It is strongly believed that an indicative national physical plan could be theoretically justifiable, professionally practicable and socially useful facet of town planning process-system: it should also be remembered that sometimes "men are apt to mistake the strength of their feeling for the strength of their argument" resenting "the chill touch and relentless scrutiny of logic".<sup>1</sup> The necessity for self-awareness in planners (Glass, 1959; Foley, 1960; Ash, 1966; Reade, 1968a) - concerning both themselves and their subject<sup>2</sup> - is therefore fully acknowledged, provided that it is balanced by appropriate self-confidence.

In looking to general research methodology<sup>3</sup> for organising principles in the establishment of a conceptual framework through which to develop the study, consideration was given to a number of issues. These included domain assumptions, formulation of working hypotheses, definitions, balance between of theory and empirical observation, modelling of findings and appraisal of results.<sup>4</sup> For example, it was taken as axiomatic that town planning treats of people<sup>5</sup> and environment, and that to bring objectivity to such a socio-environmental polemic is not always easy or possible; an hypothesis was sought which offered both academic and pragmatic challenges within the town planning domain; it was expected that the subject area,

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<sup>1</sup>W. E. Gladstone, British statesman.

<sup>2</sup>For example, when many were still bemused by the "old style" plan, Jones (1964, p.23) commented that it "does need to be re-examined as an instrument of general policy-making to see how well it stands up to the pressure and strains of the world in which we are now living".

<sup>3</sup>Useful background was found in, for example, Beveridge (1957); Ryan (1970); Bell and Newby (1971); the author is also indebted to various colleagues for provoking the development of ideas.

<sup>4</sup>Chance, imagination and intuition can play their part alongside more scientifically ordered approaches.

<sup>5</sup>Power (1965) offers a forceful and practical reminder in 'The Forgotten People'; also Buchanan (1972, p.87), but with different emphasis.



relative to the particularised approach of the study, might require further definition, interpretation and clarification; substantive and procedural theories would need to be related to their potential contributions and relevance to empirical observation; findings should be constructive; and results need to be seen in the light of any conditioning constraints (ideologies, theories, methodologies, disciplines, personalities etc.) inherent in their derivation.<sup>1</sup>

Both deductive and inductive reasoning<sup>2</sup> play their part in the methodology and procedure adopted, as do historical/descriptive/analytical/prescriptive elements: not least important is the town planner's special skill - "a synoptic grasp of complex situations, and arising out of it, the faculty of creative synthesis" (Kantorowich, 1967, p.177). An historical element is useful because "without a long running start in history we shall not have the momentum in our consciousness to take a sufficiently bold leap into the future" (Mumford, 1961, p.3). Description is a necessary foundation for knowledge and understanding, not so that we "grow daily to honour facts more and more, and theory less and less",<sup>3</sup> but because "every fact that is learned becomes a key to other facts".<sup>4</sup> Analysis bridges the gap between facts and their effective synthesis. Finally, a prescriptive component is a logical end-product in a socially purposeful future-directed process. The search for a theoretical framework indicated that no one model was "tailor made", but the construct used by David M. Smith (1971, pp.15-17) for inquiry into industrial location analysis provided a helpful basis.

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<sup>1</sup> Ashworth (1968, p.237) reminds us that "town and country planning in its modern sense is very young, richer in error than in anything else, constantly in danger of being led astray".

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the application of J. S. Mill's inverse deductive method (Lichfield, 1966, p.116).

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Carlyle, British historian and essayist.

<sup>4</sup> E. L. Youmans, American chemist.



Although "the core of planning has been established; there is an intellectual basis with a central body of knowledge to which accretions of related fields of interest have been added" (Cherry, 1970, p.176), multi- and interdisciplinary relationships in town planning cannot be minimised.<sup>1</sup> This eclecticism brings its own strengths and dangers: because any discipline "inevitably reflects a degree of selectivity ... we must immediately warn against the reification of our particular conceptions" (Foley, 1960, p.86). The author's debt to geography especially in respect of its synoptic approach, is freely owned. In scope, geographical investigation has developed significantly since Richard Hartshorne (1939) produced his classic analysis, 'The Nature of Geography': nevertheless, the areal differentiation of the earth's surface - now with increased emphasis towards social, urban and regional systems, aided by widening theoretical horizons and techniques, notably in analytical/quantitative methods<sup>2</sup> - makes realistic background to town planning. Indeed, the two disciplines share a wide community of interest,<sup>3</sup> including their fields of inquiry, concepts, methodologies, factual bases and techniques: either might, for instance, examine regional place-folk-work interactions with reference to determinist/possibilist theory, through a systems approach, using census data and spatial analysis models. The view that geography is descriptive but town planning - "an art which uses scientific method to improve the craft" (Thorburn, 1970, p.172) - prescriptive, is simple and apposite: certainly geography, in seeking through "survey and study to understand and explain the present condition and use of our physical environment"

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<sup>1</sup>See, for example, the Schuster Committee (1950); Foley (1960); McLoughlin (1965a); Rose (1970); Amos (1971); Chadwick (1971).

<sup>2</sup>As in the work of R. J. Chorley, P. Haggett and D. Harvey among others.

<sup>3</sup>See, for example, Freeman (1958); Zetter (1966). There is much overlap as in Stamp (1963); Dickinson (1964); Jones (1966); Chisholm and Manners (1971); Manners (1972); and Hall (1973).



(Zetter 1966, p.272), can be a very helpful adjunct to town planning, particularly at the macro scales.

The study embraces an operational and, to a lesser extent, project oriented approach to research:<sup>1</sup> it aims towards improving the town planning process, contemplates a degree of innovation<sup>2</sup> and seeks constructive conclusions having both social purpose and practical application so that a better articulation of national planning may result in a better performance of town planning as a whole.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>In the context of the categories of research - basic (pure/fundamental and objective); applied (operational and project); and development - distinguished by the Zuckerman Committee in 1961 and discussed by Lichfield (1966, pp.115-116).

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Faludi (1973, p.317): "A positive theory of planning treats its subject matter to make "prescriptions concerning improvements to the institutions and the style of planning based on valid knowledge".

<sup>3</sup>The desire to overview a broad subject results in much reliance upon secondary sources: a sequential and specialised study in depth, developing primary material, has potential for a Ph.D thesis.



## Appendix B

## SUMMARY OF MATTERS REQUIRED TO BE CONTAINED IN A STRUCTURE PLAN WRITTEN STATEMENT: TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (STRUCTURE AND LOCAL PLANS) REGULATIONS 1971, SCHEDULE 1, PART II

- (i) Existing structure, needs and opportunities for change.
- (ii) Effect of changes, proposed or anticipated.
- (iii) New towns implications.
- (iv) Town development implications.
- (v) Population, employment and industry, existing and projected.
- (vi) Regional economic planning and development policies.
- (vii) Social policies and considerations.
- (viii) Availability of resources.
- (ix) Criteria for control of development.
- (x) Relationship between the policies of the plan.
- (xi) Wider context of policies in the plan.
- (xii) Any other relevant matters.



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### Notes

1. Consideration was given to various ways of structuring the bibliography other than by the alphabetical sequence of authors which has been adopted, but it was felt that the alternatives would result in as many difficulties as advantages.
2. Abbreviations are used in the text for references (subsequent to the first which is given in full) where the source is both lengthy and well known.
3. Acts of Parliament and Statutory Instruments are not included in the bibliography.
4. Because of the wide range of authorship and time-scale included in Faludi (1973), the date of original publication has been used in respect of individual items.
5. The following abbreviations are used in the bibliography:-
  - E.P. (Environment and Planning)
  - J.A.I.P. (Journal of the American Institute of Planners)
  - J.T.P.I./J.R.T.P.I. (Journal of the Town Planning Institute/  
Journal of the Royal Town Planning Institute)
  - O.A.P. (Official Architecture and Planning)
  - R.S. (Regional Studies)
  - T.C.P. (Town and Country Planning)
  - T.C.P.S.S. (Proceedings of the Town and Country Planning  
Summer School)
  - U.S. (Urban Studies)



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