Planning History

Bulletin of the Planning History Group

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Notes for Contributors
The prime aim of Planning History is to increase an awareness of developments and ideas in planning history in all parts of the world. In pursuit of this aim, contributions are invited from members and non-members alike for any section of the bulletin. Articles should normally not exceed 2500 words, and may well reflect work in progress. Photographs and other illustrations may be included. Contributions submitted on a disc, with accompanying hard copy, are to be encouraged. Please contact the editor for format details.

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Editorial

This issue sees a new editor in post. As a first task I must pay tribute to my predecessor, Dennis Hardy of Middlesex Polytechnic, who created Planning History in its present form out of the old Planning History Bulletin. The professionalism of the finish which he introduced has undoubtedly greatly enhanced both its own reputation and that of the Group over the last few years. Thanks are due also to Steve Chilton of Middlesex Polytechnic who undertook the detailed design of the Planning History's format. The best compliment I can pay them both is to keep the format as unchanged as the slight changes in production technologies allow.

As I assume the duties of editor I can of course well appreciate the size of the task they have undertaken! However, I have been fortunate to acquire the services of Sue Bartlett, School of Planning Administrator, to word process and format the content, ready for printing, which will continue at Middlesex Polytechnic's well equipped print unit. Sue's experience of publishing is considerable and she was once secretary to Robert Maxwell at Pergamon Press (and now, as British readers will know, but non-British readers may not, proprietor of the Daily Mirror, Britain's second largest circulation newspaper and much else). In deference to Planning History Group's Treasurer I will resist the temptation to say any more about Sue's former employer. However with Sue having survived such a background, we can be assured that the production of Planning History will be in safe hands.

The flow of material, particularly articles, has been gratifying and I have already got the makings of the next issue. Please continue the good work, especially our many non-British readers. Particularly welcome, though less forthcoming, are reports of meetings, research and relevant practice and notices of forthcoming events in any country. Publishing these forms an important part of Planning History's function and reinforces the value of the Planning History Group as an information network. So please send such material in. Readers will also note a new occasional feature focusing on the Cartoon as a source for the planning historian. Again readers' contributions on this theme are warmly welcomed.

Stephen V. Ward
NOTICES

The Society for American City and Regional Planning History 3655 Darbyshire Drive, Hilliard, Ohio 43026-2534, USA, (614) 876-2170

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Fourth National Conference on American Planning History and Fifth International Conference: Planning History Group The Jefferson-Sheraton Hotel, Richmond, Virginia November 7-10, 1991

Co-sponsored by:
The Society for American City and Regional Planning History, The Planning History Group (The United Kingdom), The Urban History Association and the Virginia Commonwealth University: Department of Urban Studies and Planning, and Department of Art History

General Chairman: Francois-Auguste de Montequin Program Chair: Christopher Silver Programme Committee: Christopher Silver (SACRPH) Mary Corbin Sies (UHA) Gordon Cherry (PHG)

Papers are most cordially solicited on all aspects of the history of the planning and development of communities. Each paper will be presented in a 40-minute session including a brief introduction, a 25-minute presentation by the author, and a 10-minute critique. Papers will be reviewed by the Programme Committee.

All materials shall be rendered to:
Professor Christopher Silver
Program Chair, Planning History Conference Department of Urban Studies and Planning Virginia Commonwealth University P. O. Box 2008 Richmond, VA 23284 Phone (804) 367-1134

SCHEDULE OF DUE DATES:

NOTICES

March 1, 1991: Final date for receipt of proposals Requirements for submission: a 700-800 word detailed abstract, a tentative title, and a one-page author vita ending with identification of the author’s membership in SACRPH, UHA and/or PHG. All materials to be rendered in four copies.

July 15, 1991: Notification of acceptance or rejection by the Program Committee.

August 1, 1991: Publication and distribution of the final conference program and conference registration materials in the Autumn SACRPH newsletter, to be sent to all members of SACRPH, UHA and PHG.

October 1, 1991: Authors of accepted papers to render four copies of their final paper to the Chair of the Program Committee, as well as a copy of the finished paper to their assigned commentator-critic.

October 15, 1991: Conference registration materials due without late penalty: last date for registration for special events.


OTHER HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CONFERENCE

Keynote Address by Professor Gordon Cherry of the Planning History Group (United Kingdom): Biennial SACRPH Awards Program and Presidential Address by Genie Birch of Hunter College, NYC.

Receptions Friday and Saturday evenings, November 8 and 9, and dedication of Monument Avenue Sessions No 1 and 9, and dedication of Monument Avenue Sessions No 1 and 9, and dedication of Monument Avenue Sessions No 1 and 9, and dedication of Monument Avenue Sessions No 1 and 9, and dedication of Monument Avenue

Tour of Colonial Williamsburg on Sunday, November 10, and other tours of Historic Richmond.

Your participation in this event is most cordially invited

Joint ACP and AESOP International Congress, Oxford, UK 8-12 July 1991

Planning History readers will have seen notices of this important conference in earlier issues. Just available are first details of the Planning History Track which includes 34 papers that are likely to interest members of the Planning History Group. The Conference registration fee is £25 for bookings before 15 March (£100 after), which includes abstracts, relevant papers, refreshments, lunches, receptions and social arrangements. Accommodation, visits and the conference dinner are extra. Booking information may be obtained from Carolin Tidbury, Continuing Education Centre, Oxford Polytechnic, OXFORD OX3 0BP, UK. Phone: 0685 819436 and Fax: 0685 819449. Planning History Group members should note that preference in bookings may be given to AESOP/ACP members.

Planning History Track: July 9th

Session No 3 9.00-10.20 am

TRANSATLANTIC CONNECTIONS (1) Moderator: to be arranged

Albers, Gerd (Technical University of Munich), Influences of US City Planning on Germany

Menkäus, William (Pratt Institute), Catherine Bauer: An American Account of European Modern Architecture and Housing Estates

Ward, Stephen (Oxford Polytechnic), The Local Role in Promoting Economic Growth 1870-1939: A Transatlantic View (UK and Canada)

Parsons, K C (Cornell University), British and American Community Design: Clarence Stein’ Manhattan Transfer; Unwin to Stein to Stephenson to Hoppenfield and Whittelsey, a Triple Play!

Session No 2 10.30-12.00 noon

TRANSATLANTIC CONNECTIONS (2) Moderator: Gerekts, Larry, Ohio State University

Safer, Michael (University College, London), ‘Transatlantic’ contributions to the Transition from ‘Colonial’ to ‘Developmental’ Urban Planning in the Wider World, 1940-1965

Robinson, Elwin (Kent State University), British Proposals for American Settlement: Granville Sharp’s Plan for Town and Township.

Scholz, Gordon (University of Nebraska), Ebenzer Howard: The Nebraska Connection

Hancock, John (University of Washington), And a Few Marines: Military Bases and City Planning in Sandiego.

Commentator: to be arranged

Session No 3 2.30-3.50 pm

ON THE STUDY OF PLANNING HISTORY (1)

Moderator: to be arranged

Rowells, Shousky (University of Toronto), Writing our own History

Hardy, Dennis (Middlesex Polytechnic), Planning History and the Third Millennium

Thomas, June and Thomas, Richard (Michigan State University), Understanding the Present State of US Cities: Joining Black Urban History and Planning History

Edwardson, M (Arch University of Norway), On the Track of Planning in Urban History.

Session No 4 4.00-5.30 pm

ON THE STUDY OF PLANNING HISTORY (2)

Moderator: Gerekts, Larry

Smith, R (Nottingham Polytechnic), The Historical Context of the Ideas of E F Schumacher

Tehrani, Katharine (University of Hawaii), The City as Discourse: The Origins of American City Planning.

Dunin-Woywod, Halona (Ogle School of Architecture), Urban Form and the Issue of Beauty: On the Promotion and ‘Administration’ of Beauty in the Recent Millennium.

Hill, David (University of Colorado, Denver), Street Life in Lewis Mumford’s Philosophy of Urban Form History.

Mann, Lawrence (University of Arizona), ‘Privatism’ and Alternate Historic Patterns in the Evolution of Urban Development and its Planning.

Planning History Track: Thursday, July 11th

Session No 5 9.00-10.20 am

THE CITY IN THE AMERICAS (1)

Moderator: to be arranged

Echoles, Gordon (Texas A & M University), Planning and Design of the Early Hispanic Cities in the New World.

Pesciuto, Gorgio (Dept Urbn, Venice), Historic Cities of Brazil.
Spragge, Godfrey (Queen’s University, Kingston), Early Town Planning in Southwestern Ontario: A Tale of Three Cities.

Lang, Michael (Rutgers University), Yorkshi Village, Camden, New Jersey: The Success of a World War I Era Planned Village Suggests a Vision for Modern Urban America.

Session No 6 10:30-12:00 noon
THE CITY IN THE AMERICAS (2)
Stephenson, Bruce (Rollins College), Saving Eden: The Merging of Ecology and Planning in Florida.

Weiss, Marc (Columbia University), The Evolution of commercial Skyscraper Zoning in American Cities.

Elmer, Michael (Lake Forest College), Experiencing Megalopolis in Princeton (New Jersey).

Conorley, Charles (Florida State University), ‘One Great City’: Birmingham, Alabama’s Struggle for Greatness Through Suburban Annexation and Consolidation, 1945 to the Present.

Commentator: to be arranged
Planning History Track: Friday July 12th
Session No 9 9:00-10:30 am
PERIODICITY AND PATTERNS OF CHANGE IN PLANNING HISTORY (A Roundtable) Moderator: Gerckens, Larry

Panelists: Johnson, David, University of Tennessee, Harvey, University of Wisconsin - Madison, Mo randi, Corinna (Milan State, Italy).

The Urban History Association
The late 19th century city
Town planning in its modern meaning is essentially a 20th century term. The notions that the industrial city might be shaped in its spatial composition, its size determined, its land use parcels organized, its road network predetermined, its housing standardsameliorated, and its aesthetic qualities enhanced, all belong to the opening years of this century. Of course we acknowledge that elements of this comprehensive impulse were already in place, in various practices of the State, both central and local, which sought to tackle the perceived imperfections of the 19th century city and to regulate its growth. But the fact was that by the close of the 19th century we would still find urban planners espousing Vernacular Cottage traditions.

Cavalcanti, J C S (University of Manchester), The Development of the Water Industry in 19th Century Britain.

Morandi, Corinna (Milan Polytechnic), Infrastructural Process and Town Development Planning in Milan at the end of the 19th Century.

Ciacci, L (Arch University of Venice), Italian Rhodes 1912-1923: How a City can be Invented.

Commentator: Warburton, Ralph, University of Miami; Gerckens, Larry, Ohio State University
Session No 8 4:00-5:30 pm
CHRISTOPHER TUNNARD: MULTINATIONAL VISIONARY PLANNER Moderator: Gerckens, Larry
Warburton, Ralph (University of Miami), Christopher Tunnard: The Anticipatory Generalist Planner.

Cossling, David (University of Cincinnati), Christopher Tunnard: A Pioneer in Urban Visual Analysis.

Reed, K David (University Wisconsin - Milwaukee), Christopher Tunnard: A Planner’s Perspective on Historic Preservation.

DeAngelis, James (University of Pittsburgh), The Transportation Connection in Planning at Yale University.

Commentator: to be arranged
Planning History Track: Friday July 12th
Session No 9 9:00-10:30 am
PERIODICITY AND PATTERNS OF CHANGE IN PLANNING HISTORY (A Roundtable) Moderator: Gerckens, Larry

Panelists: Johnson, David, University of Tennessee, Harvey, University of Wisconsin - Madison, Mo randi, Corinna (Milan State, Italy).

The Urban History Association

Articles
Twentieth Century Developments in European City Planning
Gordon E Cherry University of Birmingham

This paper attempts to map out the signposts which gave direction to the 20th century course of town planning. It is written from a British perspective, but the compass needle reflects the magnetic pull of a wide European tradition. It addresses the question: what have been the guiding beacons for the spatial organisation and layout of cities this century? Why were those beacons so compelling, what has been our experience of them, what remains valid and what new visions might be before us?

The late 19th century city
Town planning in its modern meaning is essentially a 20th century term. The notions that the industrial city might be shaped in its spatial composition, its size determined, its land use parcels organized, its road network predetermined, its housing standardsameliorated, and its aesthetic qualities enhanced, all belong to the opening years of this century.

www.encyclopedia.com
American, Henry George, and Damaschke in Germany, were among the notion of new forms of taxation to relieve poverty and to redistribute wealth.

This catalogue of pressure points is impressive. It confirms the view that in the minds of a large cross section of informed opinion at that time the late 19th century city had become the ultimate evil. We can obviously challenge this view today: after all, by the turn of the century the majority of the urban population was better housed and better fed than ever before; the great industrial cities, in spite of trade cycles, were economically buoyant, and commercial enterprise flourished; the democratic governance of cities had taken root through measures of political reform and they were effectively administered. Nineteenth century building had produced cities of architectural style and quality, the European city rising to pianos of elegance and prosperity. In the balance of assessment today these are some of the contrary impressions that would have to be taken into account. But that is not the point.

The reality must be that a hundred years ago reformist opinion prevailed that the major industrial cities (particularly those which were in 19th century creations, rather than those which added industrial functions to medieval origins) were environmentally unpleasant, socially unacceptable, economically inefficient and a tinder box for the conflagration of political unrest. The industrial and working class quarters of the capital cities including London, Paris and Berlin, and the burgeoning sprawl of lesser centres such as Budapest and Warsaw, attracted the same hostility. The signposts for our century were erected on that terrain of anti-industrial and anti-urban sentiment.

Amongst this diverse groundswell there was a number of broadly common targets. The most enduring related to health. It soon became apparent that the growing industrial cities were unhealthy. Plague had not visited Britain, at least in any serious way, for many years and it came as a shock when mortality rates rose in the larger towns. The arrival of cholera in 1832 and periodic revisits over the next half century caused panic and it took something before the case was ascribed accurately to impure drinking water. Another killer disease was typhus, generally associated with squalor, filth and low resistance to disease. Tuberculosis and other respiratory diseases were linked to impurities in the air. Urban death rates remained high throughout the century; a law was probably associated with the compulsory medical inspection of school children and the isolation of contagious diseases in purpose-built hospitals, as much as anything. However, by the end of the century it was being posited that London and the larger cities were the homes of a puny, urban people; race degeneration was held to be the cause of a poor military performance in the South African Boer War. In Germany the Prussian army was ill-served by recruits from Berlin.

Another target related to the innate congestion of cities expressed in terms of high densities (the number of people crowded together per unit area of land) and overcrowding (the number of people per dwelling). The impenetrable courts and alleys of old London (the so called 'rookeries'), the mietskaseren of Berlin, the wooden dens-houses of Moscow and the tenements of Paris, all gave evidence of the high incidence of ill-health, sustained on abject poverty - the characteristic of the 'submerged tenth' amongst the urban populations of Europe and the New World. Here, housing reform went hand in hand with social reform, such was the assumed correlation between the quality of the housing environment and the social and behavioural mores of the inhabitants.

The third target concerned the impact of industrialisation. The 19th century was widely held to have been a period of ugliness, and this in spite of the exciting and often dramatic new forms of building techniques and environments such as Town Halls, Opera houses and theatres, and the solid qualities of much Victorian commercial building. But the popular image conjured up a plethora of smoky chimneys, the philistinism of the Arts and Crafts movement. In Britain John Ruskin supplied the intellectual force and William Morris the practical application.

By the end of the century, then, for a variety of reasons, and with a number of specific targets in mind, the city was viewed with a mixture of both pride and astonishment at achievement, though coupled with anxiety about its deep-seated failings. Perhaps above all there was a feeling that the growth of the largest cities (none larger than London with 4.5 million people) had become uncontrollable. Where would the urban surge end? The future was regarded with apprehension. Was it not time to call a halt or devise other ways of urban living?

More distinctive were the Futurists whose Manifesto of 1909 spoke of a violent break with the past and the conscious destruction of an industrial civilisation. New possibilities in architecture encouraged a technological mania about future cities: in Milan, in 1914, Antonio Sant'Elia exhibited a visionary project for a city of towering buildings and elevated roads. In Paris, Eugène Hénard drew up plans for the transformation of the street network of the city, and the reconstruction of street intersections, which included for the first time the fly-over.

In America there was more confidence in a capacity to visually enhance the built environment and to attract enlightened commercial interests; perhaps we should recall that apart from the north east seaboard US city growth only assumed real significance in the last quarter of the 19th century. But the City Beautiful movement for a time promised cities of dignity and splendour with business enterprise linked to concepts of public good; Burnham's Plan for Chicago in 1909 was extraordinary because of the generous funding by that city's business elite. Meanwhile, following the advocacy of Frederick Law Olmstead, park and landscape design from mid-century onwards suggested early possibilities for the greening of cities.

In Britain, on the other hand, the signpost to the future lay in new ways of arranging housing, essentially at rents the working classes could afford, while subscribing to design principles that would meet the environmental targets of the day: the provision of fresh air, sun and natural light in everyday living conditions. This meant an attack on 'Lancashire high density and rates of overcrowding. But a quarter of a century of bye-law improvement only suggested a future city of mean, dull, regimented streets and squares. Instead, a veritable revolution in approach sought an informality in street layout, greater provision of open space, and a return to a vernacular in housing through the adoption of cottage designs. William Lever's Port Sunlight near Liverpool and George Cadbury's Bournville in Birmingham provided new models to follow for progressive estate development, but it was Raymond Unwin and his cousin-in-law Barry Parker who both created and sustained the most enduring, practical solutions in residential architecture, estate layouts and forms of planned development. Work at New Earswick (York), Letchworth and Hampstead were beacons for the future, popularising the low density garden suburb.

An equally significant break with the past came with Ebenezer Howard's Garden City. The publication of Tomorrow a peaceful path to real reform in 1899, and its revision under the better known title Garden Cities of
Tomorrow in 1952 proved seminal, giving implicit encouragement to the planned dispersal of cities. Perhaps initially Howard only had in mind the building of a cooperative enterprise as a satellite, as indicated by his early preference of Unwinville as a name for his new settlement. But the strategic model of Social City, as a cluster of Garden Cities, was seized upon by his followers and welded into a movement for transformation of metropolitan cities. Dispersal became the keynote, and a worldwide mood was captured. The International Garden City Association was founded in 1913, followed by initiatives in numerous countries, though the model was capable of many interpretations and satisfied many different needs.

The big city had another problem in addition to that of poor housing conditions: this concerned its transport arrangements. The horse-drawn and later the electric tram was supplemented by the suburban train, with the railway underground in at least three European cities by the end of the century - London, Paris and Berlin. The arrangements emphasized the radial structure of cities, but a new way beckoned which offered the possibility of a radical departure from earlier arrangements. This was the linear city, first experimented with in a Madrid suburb in 1882, by an engineer, Soria y Mata. His vision was of a new city, a network of buildings on both sides; in a geometrically regular city plan the 'spine' would be a 40-metre wide highway with railway tracks in the centre. In the event, only a 5-km sector was built on a sharply reduced scale.

This was essentially a technical solution to cities, just as the 'crazy late' of a British medical reformer, B W Richardson, - a set of perfect sanitary arrangements which would transform urban living. Linear city was the engineer's solution, and with the development of the car, and shortly the aeroplane, new models for transportation were introduced as future urban solutions. However, with new forms of building construction, particularly those permitting tall structures, a new break from the past came with architecture. It was bolstered by an ideology which sought to give architecture a social purpose. The modern movement's apostle was the Swiss architect, naturalised Frenchman, le Corbusier: his solution for Paris as exhibited in 1925 told all: the old city would be swept away leaving only a few historic monuments and the new would be in the form of towering structures of glass and concrete. The modern movement was to make very different statements about the city, society, and work but note the various messages emanating from, for example, Tony Garnier's plans for Lyons and mass housing in his city, or Rotterdam and Zurich, and a number of German cities including Kassel, Frankfurt on Main and Berlin. Architects Gropius, Moltke, J J P Oud, W Gropius, E May and B Taut led the attack. The two great models of the century were seen in total contradiction: Howard embellished by the design intimacy of Unwin, versus le Corbusier and his disciples proclaiming massiveness and impersonality. In between, Franck Lloyd Wright's dream of dispersed homesteads, perhaps suitable for the American situation, failed to have wider appeal. Broadacre City never really had a chance against Garden City or Radiant City.

Professionals concerned with urban futures became more confident. They were certain that their particular model was the answer. They were sure that through rational planning 20th century society would be given a new future. Comprehensive plans proclaimed the message: man could create an environment which would eradicate the ills of the past, and he could fashion a new art of civic design which would apply a fresh touch of humanity to urban living. Models of dispersal set the strategic scene: for example Unwin's Plan for Greater London, the New York Regional Plan and that for Greater Moscow. Architects and planners set out the ground rules for modern urbanism, such as the Athens Charter of 1933, which first found functional expression in Warsaw in 1936, establishing conventional wisdom in planning practice for a generation and more. Meanwhile geographers and sociologists were providing their own understanding of urban form and spatial organisation, emphasizing the neighborhood as the desirable unit of city building at the local scale.

World War II scarcely broke the threads of consensus; in fact in many ways it strengthened them. Moreover, because of the need to rebuild after nearly six years of devastation, it gave a certain urgency to the need to redress the imbalances and determine options in city planning. One striking feature, however, was the central role of the State for at least 30 years in the social democracies of the west. Master planning in the broad context of State welfare was solidly established, and planning systems fashioned to permit considerable central control over the operation of private markets in land, housing and development. The State would be the steersman to a nobler future; the State would be the benevolent shaper of the post-war world. With these assumptions it embraced both the structural model of mass housing and the design model of modernism. In time, the maximum impact would fall on residential environments, seen both in the farflung city and a prevailing form of high rise architecture for mass housing. Pervading both philosophy and practice, the notion of comprehensive planning was compelling, the spirit of that ill-understood prophet Patrick Geddes continually evoked.

Experience

By the time of our present day, most of these signposts had been followed to some extent during the century, more than one often at the same time. As a result, the planning map now appears extremely confused. Each visionary path has been followed, but none to the ultimate of its innate logic. This has been the story of city planning in the west over its formative 80 or 90 years' history. Let us consider the experiences gained from flirting with so many options.

The model provided by the utopian communities still offers a certain liveliness, but it has done no more than meet the aspirations of a minority movement. The practical inability to escape from the city for very long, except for a very few people, has been a profound reality: so too has been the fact that utopian schemes often have a certain quasi-human ill-will within the communities themselves. So in itself the rejection of city living for ideal communities elsewhere has been an intermittent, unreliable beacon, but the often associated dream of rural paradise is still very much alive. A rural way of life is a preferred form of living for many, if attainable, the positive aspects, a green setting and the merits of small communities powerfully complementing the desire to escape from the city and its attendant social problems. The 20th century may yet see a newly urbanised and industrialised countryside, returning to the balance of earlier years.

The appeal of individual forms of housing, typically low density and offering variations on the theme of detached or semi-detached dwelling in suburban penteaques, has been a recurrent one. Perhaps best illustrated in Britain, this style of housing has proved infinitely flexible and adaptive. Much has been achieved and the British suburban tradition has many admirers. But the romantic inheritance sought by Unwin was soon plagiarised and downgraded by a combination of mass production, poor imitation and cost constraints. The motif became standardised in both the private and public sectors, not only interwar but also post-war housing estates in their time being ridiculed or stigmatised. We have to ask: with rare exceptions, have these new suburban environments become residential areas of enduring quality?

The same verdict can be applied to the results of the garden city movement. In spite of many flirtations throughout Europe, its practical impact has been slender. In Britain only two were built (Letchworth and Welwyn) and we have to turn to the post-war new towns for the full flowering of centrally planned programmes of population redistribution and town building. Twenty eight new towns successful, attending to the problems of population dispersal, regional regeneration and strategic growth, were no mean feat. But the programme effectively came to an end in 1976 with the termination of Stonehouse (for central Scotland) and the redirection of effort to secure the revival of inner cities. The early new towns reflected all the high hopes of State-directed planning: they were the jewels in the crown for advanced layout, quality of design and novelty of architecture. But in the end they achieved no more than was being accomplished in the country, through different agencies in the private sector.

The planned dispersal of population may have got off to a good start, but the limitations of the policy and its consequences are now plain. Where now is the city? In the process of dispersal, have we lost a treasure house of concentration? The function of centrality has been severely weakened, peripheral nodes now vying for supremacy. And if the centre has lost much of its identity, the edges blur imperceptibly into the rural fringe. The British at least have tried to have the best of both worlds - dispersal and containment - and the recently completed Green Belt is a feature of the British planning system. But in a market economy long-term metropolitan planning is extremely difficult: public sector guidance can do little more than steer a course between competing interests in the development of land.

Certain other European countries have a tradition of greater dirigisme in these matters. Wren's plan for London after the Great Fire was never put into effect and Britain never had grand Renaissance cities. In the 19th century Paris had its Haussmann and Vienna was transformed after the removal of its old fortifications, but London's improvement at the same time was quite piecemeal. Britain rather distrusts giving power to single-minded town builders. The technocratic solution of the linear city therefore had no appeal; the Modern Architectural Research Group's (MARS) plan for a radically redeveloped...
London at the outbreak of the Second World War found no echo in later plans for reconstruction. In fact, however, the notion of building around a transit spine is an attractive one and the operation of the private market is currently throwing up some approximations. Motorways form ideal locations for a variety of late 20th century forms of development, as have the belt-ways around American cities.

It is with housing, however, that there has been the greatest sense of disillusion. Popular opinion today would aver that the modern movement in its impact on residential architecture has created unloved cities. Britain suffered badly when its vernacular tradition was overturned, in other countries where apartment block living was more customary, the building of high rise and tower block settlements on a massive scale has still been sharply criticised. From Oscar Newman’s concern over ‘defensible space’ in New York, to allegations of poor construction standards, inadequate maintenance, and environments of squalor across Europe, hostile rejection of an imposed urban form has characterised at least the last two decades. Architecture, professional competence and the insensitivity of the building industry, it is argued, has simply let us down. The worst excesses are to be found in the Eastern bloc countries, where low-grade state building had virtually no private sector competitor.

The vision of human cities now looks very tarnished against the high hopes earlier raised. Vision became self-delusion. There is a feeling that the very professionals in whom so much confidence resided, are not for a client society. An Athens building had virtually no private sector competitor.

So from all sides the signposts to the future have proved unreliable. Compared with the past, there is now no consensus as to what cities should look like, nor how their internal functions should be arranged. Cities were formerly regarded as artefacts or phenomena which could be guided, shaped and given coherence; they were definitive and could be given boundaries; their historic centres were focal points for tradition and identity. The operation of private markets could not secure their future; capitalism needed a helping hand and the conviction grew that the application of rational forethought and the insights of professional idealism would provide the key. Western countries developed their particular varieties of control and development systems, but if there is one overall conclusion, it is that these systems have proved effective on things that don’t terribly matter, but much less effective on the really important. Moreover these systems have demonstrated a poor capacity to anticipate and respond to change. In the last quarter of the century, in a reversal of attitude, we have cast off many previous suspicions of the market and turned again to the vigour of private investment as the key structural determinant in city growth. But this is no panacea either, because the operation of post-industrial commerce, in which so much is based on flexibility and modernism, is capable of creating restless, self-destructive cities in which social, economic and environmental extremes lead to a greater degree of polarisation between community groups than we would wish.

Quo vadis?

Where then do we turn for the guiding lights? What visions for the 21st century city do we have and how do we express them?

Perhaps we should say initially that the late 20th century has lost confidence in any notion of one, certain, definitive goal for the city. In one sense this is a good thing because we can reasonably conclude today that the principles of spatial organisation and design criteria will vary according to cultural traditions and prevailing sets of economic, social and political organisation. Moreover, the principles may change over time. These are the lessons of planning history, but unfortunately it does mean that we are no longer guided by consensual views as to what cities should look like nor how life in big cities might best be organised; rather lamely we conclude that it all depends. To the impact of a dynamic, capitalist order and our urban environments seem to be losing their permanence. Old certainties have gone; at a time of very considerable change, our efforts can be helped by practical adherence to the approaches I have outlined.

There are those who will argue that there are considerable risks in adopting such a pragmatic, adaptive stance; town planning is surely about preparing definitive plans with precise objectives. But what objectives? We are not controlling the city of the 1930s, with a panoply of State investment at our disposal; we are still trying to come to terms with the city of 1990, changing out of all recognition through the operation of private markets. The dilemma is that the polarised city of the 21st century will be created soon enough by those who have the means to reject it, before we are able to save it: they will increasingly leave a city and create new forms of spatial organisation. Perhaps we should look at the crossroads of the historical development of the industrial and post-industrial city. I am sure we are at a cross roads in planning.

While pragmatism and a reluctance to embrace definitive certainties for the next century may well have to be our adopted position, visions for the future will not be swept from the planning agenda for long: dreams of ideal cities couched in political, social, economic, technological or architectural terms have punctuated our last 500 years in western civilisation. History tells us that, as in life generally, we shall have visions but their realisation will be tantalisingly elusive.

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Urban Reform in Glasgow 1850-1900 and the Views of Local Architects

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Introduction

The ready assumption with which the two key ingredients of the urban character of Glasgow are accepted - namely, the rectangular grid and four storey tenement - should not be allowed to blind us to the alternatives which were once considered. The slums of the central slums in Glasgow at about the middle of the nineteenth century were widely considered to be amongst the worst in Europe and solicited a number of proposals, many speculative, from city architects for dealing with the problem.

The views were many and varied, some were intended to encourage an official response to the problem, others were an open challenge to the initiatives finally put forward for dealing with slum conditions by the Town Council. In their way the various proposals capture the inventive energy which make up Glasgow between about 1840 and 1880, and allow us to look at design ideas which, had circumstances changed, may have made the urban reality we see today.

The debate principally concerned issues of urban layout and questions of building design. Few doubted that design held the key to solving the pressing social and sanitary problems of the day: the question was how to decide upon the best remedy to problems which had few parallels in Britain and certainly no built solutions of substance.

The housing problem was concentrated within the largely medieval Old Town of Glasgow where in 1866 lived some 50,000 people within an insanitary and overcrowded slum of 88 acres. Putting aside questions of gravity, the slums were a growing disgrace and inconvenience to a city rapidly evolving into the second city of the Empire. They formed a barrier between the east and west sides of the city, preventing access to the new railway termini which ringed the centre, and bred diseases which even threatened those in the healthier suburbs. Though Parliament was finally moved to take action in 1866, many of the proposals made by local architects stem from the decade earlier.

Questions of Urban Layout

In 1851 when the architects Charles Wilson, John Rochead and John Herbston gave their paper to the Architectural Institute of Scotland on sanitary reform in Glasgow the gridded block was the accepted form of layout in urban areas of the city. It is of interest, therefore, that their proposals for dealing with the central slums rejected the grid and advocated instead the forming of squares, circuses and other large vacuums for the 'physical and moral well-being' of Glasgow people. Such vacancies were required to promote urban ventilation and hence health, and to improve the appearance of central areas. The aesthetic landscape was also to be raised by regulating the height of buildings to the width of new streets and also to their social class. The authors, therefore, sought a well-ordered townscape, but one with far greater spatial variety than that of the Glasgow grid and one where harmonious proportion and physical hierarchy complemented sanitary reform.

A year later another city architect David Smith called for the removal of the disease infected wynds in order to build wide, straight streets. There were necessary he said in order to control the 'red republicans' who threatened to 'burst forth and spread ruin across the face of society'. James Salmon too expressed similar though more sober sentiments a year later when he called for a regulating network of new streets within the older slum areas. Even, therefore, without the urban vacancies on the Wilson, Rochead, Herbston proposals, the 'improvement street' was perceived as early as 1852 as having the capacity to bring about a combination of sanitary, social and aesthetic reform. The question concerning most commentators was what form the streets should take particularly regarding their degree of regularity and dimensions.

J. J. Stevenson, a Glasgow architect till 1870 and former pupil of David Bryce, had no doubt that the new streets should not be regular in layout as proposed by the Town Council's Improvement Scheme. He found little in favour of straight streets placed at right angles to each other and leaving large building blocks, claiming that such an arrangement not only failed to promote ventilation but led to visual monotony. He believed that the authorities should introduce variety in street planning with a mixture of narrow streets opening into wider ones and then into squares. This would not only improve the physical appearance of Glasgow but since building heights were related under the Police Acts to the width of streets they faced, would allow the building of tall working class tenements in areas normally restricted to four stores by relatively narrow streets. Furthermore, Stevenson argued that variety in street widths would encourage ventilation since areas such as squares open to the sun would be warmed and the temperature would encourage air flow within the slum areas.

Stevenson went yet further, claiming in 1868 that the traditional street pattern of Scottish cities should be followed. He asked why the traditional arrangement of placing High Streets on a ridge with houses of various heights and site planning stepped down on either side was not followed in the reconstruction of central Glasgow. Such a pattern once existed he said in Rottenrow, and the layout presented no health problems as long as the street ends were left open and faced onto parks or greens. His view of the Glasgow grid, then well established elsewhere in the city, was that it was deficient not only regarding the 'architecture of our towns, but also in matters of health, air and convenience'. Of the gridded streets at Garnet Hill, Stevenson said that the only benefit of the steep streets was that in frost they made 'admirable slides for boys, thus promoting the health and amusement of the population'.

Many in Glasgow apparently agreed with Stevenson: both John Honeymon and Alexander Thomson found his ideas sympathetic to their own position. Thomson in his fascinating 'glass-roofed streets' proposal of 1866 acknowledged his debt to Stevenson and proposed streets of greatly varying width. His plan, based upon a report commissioned by the Improvement Trustees, was for streets 60 ft, 50 ft and 50 ft wide with pends 16 ft across giving access to glass roofed courts 32 ft wide placed parallel to narrower service lanes. The urban blocks formed by the principal streets were to be 330 ft square and divided into a parallel system of glass roofed streets and lanes (Figure 2). Of the covered articles...
proposal not unlike Thomson's. Cousland argued that the long street facades of Glasgow streets should be broken by placing at right angles to the frontage squares or courts built behind a linking colonnade. These were to relieve the monotony of repeating street blocks and allow development to penetrate into the back areas. However, the Police Acts of 1862 and 1866 drafted by the City Architect, John Carrick, prohibited such an arrangement and gave encouragement to the hollow-core tenement block since the dimensions of the back court were to be one and a half times the building height, thereby ensuring a spacious square in the centre of all urban blocks (Figure 3). Infill development behind the ancient buildings fronting the principal streets of the Old Town had been one of the chief causes of the health problems, and legislation was enacted to prevent its occurrence after the new street had been constructed.

Concrete construction arranged around asphalted courts. But for all the objections made, the perimeter block of generally four storey buildings was the solution to housing problems adopted throughout Glasgow in both central and suburban areas. It was only after Carrick's death in 1890 that more flexible controls were introduced by the Glasgow Building Regulations Act of 1892.

Questions of Building Design

A related issue to matters of layout concerned whether tenement blocks, terraced houses or cottages represented the better path to urban reform. The question was, of course, largely one of density and the availability of sites for working class housing needs. Several Glasgow architects thought that suburban or new town development provided a more appropriate answer than retaining the working population with the congested city centre. The principal exponent of the garden city approach was James Salmon whose own experience as an estate developer at Dennistoun (1854) and Kelvingrove (c1860) meant he was well placed to bring an element of experience to the debate.

In Salmon's paper of 1860 on the subject of 'Workmen's Houses' given to a meeting of the Glasgow Architectural Society under the chairmanship of Charles Wilson, he proposed the deliberate construction of a number of working class estates in the healthy suburbs. These estates were to be constructed of rows of two storey houses, generally flatted, facing streets 50 ft - 60 ft across, and each house was to have its own garden. Such a pattern Salmon claimed had existed in the working districts earlier in the century, and one should add, formed the basis of much philanthropic housing in Edinburgh at the time (e.g. James Cowan's Bonebank Cottages) as well as London (e.g. Henry Roberts' model cottages at the Great Exhibition of 1851). It was also soon to be adopted at Cowlaw's Cottages (Figure 4), an estate for railway workers in the city near the suburb of Springburn built in 1863. An earlier range of two storey model dwellings for the working class had also been erected by architects.

Figure 3 Main Building Space Standards under Glasgow Police Acts 1862 and 1866. Many in Glasgow argued against the rigid spatial controls of the Police Act, not least Honeymay who said that they disadvantaged the poor by placing unnecessary and arbitrary limits on the height of buildings. He found much in favour of the Peabody Estates in London and praised their ability to use central sites to their limit, but regretted that they could not be built in Glasgow. Like Stevenson, Honeymay called for irregularity of layout with streets and squares interspersed, and claimed that high density did not preclude either open space or ventilation. He said that a good designer could build healthy houses in tall blocks at a density of 1200 people per acre but a poor designer could not achieve horticultural results without objection. David Thomson put forward similar proposals arguing that perimeter block development by itself would not provide the 25,000 houses required in central areas. The answer he said was to build tall free-standing tenements of

Figure 4 Cowlaw's Cottages, 1863.

Baird and Thomson in Crossmyloof near Langside. Built in 1856 it consisted of 44 dwellings on an acre of ground arranged as single storey dwellings reached from opposite sides of the block. The Building Chronicle records that the advantages of the design were that internal spiral staircases were not needed, that families had their own direct entrance and garden plots, and that by facing public rooms in a single direction, the best views were afforded. As in much working class housing the accommodation consisted of a single room and kitchen with blocks built in the cottage style with zinc-lattice work windows hinged in the English manner, rather than hung. The housing, long demolished, was apparently part of the body of work by Alexander Thomson's in the 'cottage orné' style, though it was perhaps one of the few early terraces by the firm of a truly working class character.

To pay for suburban working class estates Salmon said that all ornament should be avoided, as well as mistaken conveniences such as water closets. His objection to water closets was that without an adequate sewerage system in the city, the waste was simply discharged into the Clyde, thereby further endangering public health. His solution was to have traditional earth closets whereby human waste could be collected in carts and transported to the countryside to 'fertilise the impoverished soil'.

Salmon admitted that an Act of Parliament was probably required to implement his proposals since philanthropy could not meet the scale of the problem faced in Glasgow. Unless action was taken, however, he warned that builders would continue to construct tenements in the central district 'dovetailed together like an ingenious ship-master packing freight into the hold of a vessel'. The year of Salmon's paper the author was elected a town councillor and from 1866 served as an improvement Trustee, thereby ensuring that his ideas had direct influence on the municipal authorities.

Suburban new towns also found favour with Stevenson who argued in 1866 that peripheral estates should be built outside the city and hence free of the restrictive jurisdiction of the Police Acts. Such acts made the construction of working class housing impossible according to many leading architects. But the new estates as he considered they owe a debt to Haussmann's annexation of suburban land for the construction of working class estates in Paris.

Salmon expanded his views on suburban new towns in 1870 when he proposed the erection of four or five such communities each capable of housing 10-20,000 people and hence sufficient to house all those affected by the improvement scheme. Again he proposed cottage houses, one or two storeys high, set in rural surroundings suggesting a debt to the writings of John Ruskin. As an Improvement Trustee Salmon was influential: within months it was agreed to acquire two suburban estates for the development by the Improvement Trusts of model suburbs specifically for the working class. That at Oatlands cost £24,040 to acquire and at Overnern £35,000, but both were eventually laid out for terraced dwellings, not cottages since financial realities dictated four storey tenements. However, the central tree planted squares of both estates, riverside park at Oatlands (Figure 5) and wide streets suggest that Salmon's ideas were not totally submerged by municipal expediency.

Salmon, however, never fully departed from his low-density ideal. Fresh proposals were published in The
Four storey peripheral tenement blocks were to be adopted (Figure 6). The linear block is shown bisected by a walled and gated service lane giving access to closets reached from the houses by separate passageways for men and women. The flats themselves are of unusual arrangement even by Glasgow standards: the living room provides access to all bedrooms and also via stairs to the passageway which eventually reaches the outside toilet.

Except for one or two railway estates no cottage estates for the working classes were erected in Glasgow. Even the estate at Oatlands where about 4,000 were housed, the Improvement Trustees built four-storey perimeter-block tenements. If tenements had to be built in order to spread the costs of land development the question increasing in Glasgow concerned their form, height and construction. Mention has already been made of the favourable impression made by certain philanthropic housing schemes in London, especially that of the Peabody Estates. Honeymon proposed free-standing housing blocks, seven storeys high, open at their ends and placed within courts, and David Thomson who made similar proposals suggested in 1877 that such tenements be built of concrete arguing that the cinder wastes from the many foundries in Glasgow should be put to constructional use. Many architects too suggested the use of rear balconies for access to flats rather than the less healthy central stair which remained commonplace until 1890. But for all the various ideas little innovation took place, mostly because the Police Act sought a partnership between health and urban order which left little room for invention or the development of alternative building layouts.

**Figure 5** Oatlands Estate, Glasgow by City Improvement Trust 1870-2.

Honeymon sought to show that a sufficiently high density to solve urban problems could be provided by restricting building height to three storeys and adopting a linear layout. His parallel blocks were to be separated by a road only 30 feet wide part of which appears taken up by an ‘ornamental plot’ (Figure 6). The linear block is shown bisected by a walled and gated service lane giving access to closets reached from the houses by separate passageways for men and women. The flats themselves are of unusual arrangement even by Glasgow standards: the living room provides access to all bedrooms and also via stairs to the passageway which eventually reaches the outside toilet.

For all their well considered proposals private house-builders generally had little interest in employing the services of local architects, preferring instead to construct tenements which pushed the provisions of the Police Acts to their limit. As a consequence, housing for the working classes throughout the city was invariably within four storey tenements which followed the perimeter of rectangular urban blocks about 200 feet across.

**Figure 6** James Salmon’s Proposals for working class housing, The British Architect, 18.11.1881.

Even in Honeymon and Keppe’s competition submission for the design of workmen’s houses in High Street in 1890, the four-storey tenement block was adopted. Here the legacy of the Police Act is evident: the perimeter tenements are of even height without a break in the street frontage, no buildings save an ash pit are located in the rear court, and the buildings are stone faced throughout. The only measure of innovation concerns a few Baronial embellishments (thought to be the work of C. R. Mackintosh), the positioning of drying areas on roofs to the rear, and the use of granolithic paving instead of grass in the back court.

By 1892 the strict controls of the Glasgow Police Act were finally abolished, and more flexible standards introduced. This led to more innovatory housing design than hitherto permitted by both private architects and those employed within the city engineers department which continued to furnish designs for the Improvement Trust. Upon Carrick’s death in 1890 the engineer A. B. McDonald took over the reigns of public office and produced designs for the Towhead area which break with much earlier practice. The balcony access system was now adopted (Figure 7), two storey development occurs within the rear court, and buildings are brick rather than stone constructed. It was a pattern also adopted by Sir J. J. Burnet in his housing for the Glasgow Workers Dwellings Company built nearby and in the Bridgeton area in 1892 and 1897.

**Figure 7** Townhead Tenements for the City Improvement Trust designed by A. B. McDonald in 1894.

At the winding up of the City Improvement Trust in 1901 and the transfer of its responsibilities to the Corporation an element of debate returned to Glasgow housing under the auspices of the ‘Conference on Cheap Dwellings’ chaired by the Lord Provost. Many important figures in the housing movement presented papers, including Raymond Unwin, and Honeyman, now an elder statesman of the architectural profession, was amongst the delegates. The paper by the City Engineer McDonald appears to draw its inspiration, in plan at least, from Salmon’s published ideas. McDonald proposed a model estate (Figure 8) of three storey blocks of ‘clean, healthy, dwellings’, brick built with open balconies giving access to shared water closets. The configuration of linear blocks was to be relieved by circular public gardens spaced regularly after every six streets. For all the abstraction of the layout it was a form which looked both back to the model suburbs of Oatlands and Overnewton built by the Improvement Trustees in 1872, and forward to the early council estates in Glasgow of the inter-war years such as Knightswood.

**Conclusions**

If the Police Acts stifled invention when it was most needed (between 1860 and 1880), the seeds of two important ideas were sown at that time. The first concerned the value of the peripheral estate as a means of solving urban housing problems. Though
one can only trace a tenuous line of continuity between the ideas of Salmon and Stevenson to Eas terhouse and Drumchapel, it remains that suburban new towns for the working classes of Glasgow had their origins as a concept in 1860. Secondly, many Glasgow architects favoured high-rise solutions to housing problems. To Honeyman

References
3. Ibid, AIS Trans, p 47.
8. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
while there was still time'. He concludes that when the A1 has been completely converted into a London-to-Newcastle motorway:

It will no longer be a journey, but merely a drive. The age of travel is dead, and the glory of motoring is extinguished for ever. 10

An alternative view is presented here: The renewed modernisation of the A1 will create opportunities to conserve its classic character. Long live the glory of classic motoring!

Finding Classic Roads

In the days when horsepower came literally on four legs the roads frequently followed the natural rise and fall of the terrain or alternatively strove tortuously to follow a consistent contour. In either case their efficiency and comfort for travellers generally took second place to the prime need for acceptable lie-of-the-land, permitting the most superficial form of roadway engineering (or virtually no engineering at all): In his designs for great new coaching roads, Thomas Telford’s broad conceptual categories. There are the long-established traditional roads, some regrettably still carrying heavy industrial traffic on capricious alignments, and there are the modern purpose-built routes where the optimum efficiency and uniformity of traffic operation were central to their design at the outset. The differences were expressed by J. A. Hughes writing in 1956 with the inter-war arterial road schemes in mind:

In contrast with the original roads which have developed over the centuries, meandering from village to village, from town to town, following in many cases a winding valley or avoiding unsuitable ground, the modern arterial highways more closely resemble a main railway line - striking in almost a straight line across the countryside, less mindful of the topography and heedless of wayside villages. They are very clearly superimposed on the naturally developed social landscape, symbolising, perhaps, the forceful, busy and high-peaked element of a civilisation that ‘has no time to stand and stare’. 12

Ironically our modern fascination with ‘classic’ things is enabled because, for at least part of the time, we do have time to stand and stare!

The arterial roads were of course ‘mega-projects’ of their own time. In their own right they were of a significance rivalling the M25. They were also sometimes novel in design, notably in Essex where the Eastern Avenue and Southend Arterial Road offered long-distance motoring in the style of the American superhighways. (A persistent story asserts that some of the original roundabouts along Eastern Avenue were copied from a German design without any thought being given to the effect of our left-hand traffic rule. As a consequence the supposed advantage of the novel asymmetric design was confounded! Certainly, there were roundabouts whose technical details were consistent with such an occurrence).

In 1953, J. B. Priestley made his English journey. The book of the journey contains a description of the Great West Road which is worth repeating:

Being new, it did not look English. We might have suddenly rolled into California. Or, for that matter, into one of the main avenues of the old exhibitions, like the Franco-British Exhibition of my boyhood. It was the line of new factories on each side that suggested the exhibition...These decorative little buildings, all glass and concrete and chromium plate, seem to my barbaric mind to be merely playing at being factories...But if we could all get a living out of them what a pleasanter country this would be: like a permanent exhibition ground, all glass and chromium plate and nice painted signs and coloured lights. I feel there’s a catch in it somewhere. Perhaps I am on my way, at a good fifty miles an hour, to find that catch. 14

These arterial roads, with or without the industrial ribbon development, offer an interesting field of study in their own right and evidently qualify as ‘classic roads’ according to the analogy with classic cars. However, they are not given further consideration in the present article. Parkways, a widespread trunk road modernisation in the 1950s and 1960s was conducted in a much more fragmentary and incremental manner, sometimes relying on the original road to provide the links between bypasses. For example, on the A1 the provision of continuous dual carriageways from London to Newcastle, announced in 1955, was not completed until 1986, with the bypassing of part of the Barnet By-Pass at Hatfield. Figure 1 demonstrates the conceptual geometry and the incremental steps which have caused the well-known differences of character between much of the A1 and the first motorways. (That is, differences of engineering character, quite apart from the ‘social landscape’). A renewed effort of modernisation must require some study of the practical significance of the classic roads which persist as remnants from this obsolescent approach to reconstruction. These are largely to be found in their traditional role as the main road through a bypassed community, or converted to carry one-way traffic for the trunk road scheme. Some roadside rest areas are

Figure 1: Conceptual Geometry of Trunk Road Reconstruction by Incremental Steps, 1950s-1960s
recognisably derived from ‘ox-bow’ sections of the old road.

The Great North Road (A1) is the premier example of all this, but some other major routes have been handled in a similar way. Gradually, the growing pressures of traffic and the greater familiarity with motorway principles have caused the more recent trunk road schemes to resemble genuine motorways more closely. Modernisation of the A1 now is not simply a question of flyovers and wider carriageways. The new and the old must be remodelled into a different conceptual geometry.

Modernisation in the 1990s

The conceptual geometry of one type of motorway corridor is shown in Figure 2, representing a motorway implanted as a direct replacement of an existing trunk road. Clear examples of this geometry exist along much of the M5 (a direct replacement of A38 from Birmingham to Exeter) and the M6 where it replaces the long-distance function of the A6. A substantial length of the modern A12, from Brentwood (M25) to beyond Chelmsford, also follows this geometry closely, having been designed more recently than most of the A1.

There are important differences between the geometries presented in Figures 1 and 2. Most obviously, in Figure 2 the classic road remains fully effective to handle short local journeys, a facility which must normally be provided if the main route is to have motorway traffic regulations (no cyclists, no L-drivers, no horse-drawn stage coaches, etc). A second important difference is the severe curtailment, in Figure 2, of the frequency of the access points onto the main route (motorway). This is in contrast with the frequent connections for village traffic represented in Figure 1. The difference is best demonstrated by reference to existing examples. The A1(M) in Hertfordshire largely conforms to the conceptual geometry of Figure 2 and has nine access points in approximately 40 kilometres of motorway. By contrast the next length of the A1 northbound along a similar distance of dual carriageway has at least thirty public road junctions as well as numerous accesses to roadside premises and rest areas.

It has already been indicated in the construction press that the conversion of the A1 to continuous motorway will include downgrading one or other of the existing carriageways to handle two-way traffic between the local communities. This would generally produce an arrangement resembling Figure 2. It is therefore possible that the detailed planning decisions might be influenced to secure an enhanced

continuity of classic motoring opportunities and a restatement of the Great North Road as a heritage asset. To make the most of this, the friends of the Great North Road should ensure that their voice is heard in the planning process and ensure that the historical and heritage aspects are fully explored.

Unless these values are asserted effectively, it can be imagined that the road designers would tend to retain the more useful of the two carriageways (where such choice exists) rather than to conserve the historic one, with its associated traditional verges and hedgerows. Whichever of the existing carriageways is not saved will then generally be obliterated by motorway construction. There is a real danger that a creative opportunity may be lost, in favour of a starkly modern solution again.

Classic Roads are Needed

Why should modern motorway planners take any notice of classic roads enthusiasts? The ‘brand of practical relevance’, mentioned earlier, is the key.

Long-distance motoring at speed in today’s conditions can be an unpleasantly stressful experience for some drivers and routinely monotonous for many others. Motorways give the opportunity for minimum journey times but they are rarely interesting and attractive for those who seek to spend the journey pleasantly rather than quickly. At the same time, the expanding and worthy enthusiasm for classic cars is incomplete without the distinctively appropriate roads on which to enjoy them. Ironically the A1 has been regarded as the prime example of alternative long-distance motoring, offering pleasant variation in the character of the road and, until recently, less traffic stress.

It is very much in everyone’s best interest that those whose inclination is to drive at modest speeds should have the separate facility to do so, whenever this can be provided and encouraged at reasonable cost. Even for those who must cover a substantial distance at motorway speeds, the parallel classic road offers the option to vary the pace and scenery, and hence break the monotony. A full range of roadside services can usually be found in the local communities, without the hassle of the official sites. These advantages have been recognised for at least twenty years in the USA and formed the basis of the comedy movie ‘Honky-Tonk Freeway’.

Concluding Remarks

It is believed that Classic Roads Enthusiasts already exist (even if not using this particular label) but they have not yet impinged in a serious way on the processes of modern road planning. Recent authors (e.g. Champkin and, separately, Howell) have missed the crucial significance of what is now happening. The renewed modernisation of the A1, and of some other main roads, will create opportunities to conserve and even improve the classic character which currently remains. The friends of the Great North Road have a short-lived ‘window’ to bring their concern to bear on the planning process that has already started.

More generally, classic roads enthusiasts must organise to show that the study of classic roads enhances our ability to handle issues such as tourist traffic pressures, ecological stresses, and interpretive education, as well as the customary engineering aspects of road network design and upkeep.

References

Green Belts and the Origins of Adelaide’s Parklands

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The Adelaide city parklands are rightly celebrated as an example of enlightened planning, and an influence upon the Garden City and Green Belt concepts. The foundation of Adelaide and South Australia in 1836-7 makes a good story, from the original colonization concept of Edward Gibbon Wakefield to the bickering of the first settlers and the tribulations of the Surveyor-General, Colonel Light, who laid out the city (Price 1924, Pike 1957). Light, who is honoured by a statue overlooking the city, has attracted several biographies, the best of which is Dutton (1960), with more recent research in Elder (1986) and Tregenza (1989). The Light connection with Penang, Malaysia (his father founded the city of Georgetown in 1756), has been explored by Goh Ban Lee (1988). Williams (1916 and 1974) and others have traced the antecedents of the parkland or parkbelt idea, and the spread of parkbelt towns in Australia and New Zealand. Within the last few years the 150th anniversary of Light’s foundation, closely followed by the Australian bicentennial in 1988, have loosed a small flood of publications by local planners and academics (who in South Australia seem to overlap more than elsewhere), notably Hutchings (1987), Hutchings and Bunker (1986), Johnson and Langmead (1986).

Through this careful research the intellectual origins of the Adelaide city plan are now well mapped. Spanish colonial planning based upon Philip II’s Laws of the Indies was one influence, linking to the British towns established in North America by William Penn in Pennsylvania and General Oglethorpe in Savannah, Georgia. Granville Sharp’s 1794 model town plan seems the main forerunner, while T. J. Maslen’s Friend of Australia (1830) specifically advocated parkbelts.

This article intends, not to repeat material already available, but to contribute the author’s own further research on significant figures in the evolution of the parkland idea: Granville Sharp, the shadowy ‘T. J. Maslen’, and the hitherto neglected contribution of the radical politician J. A. Roebuck. It is the outcome of a short visit to South Australia in 1990.

Freetown, Sierra Leone: a forerunner of South Australia

Granville Sharp’s ‘General Plan for laying out towns and townships on the new-acquired lands’ (1794) is cited as a key document in the planning of Adelaide, but its relationship to the early years of the Sierra Leone colony in West Africa has not been recognised. Sharp (1735-1813), described in the Dictionary of National Biography as ‘philanthropist, pamphleteer and scholar’, was obsessed with the concept of individual liberty. After the American War of Independence thousands of former slaves who had fought on the British side (the so-called ‘loyal blacks’) were displaced to London, and in 1787, largely on Sharp’s prompting, the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor sponsored some four hundred of these unwanted refugees to found in Sierra Leone a free and self-governing settlement. In 1790 the town (called Granville Town in Sharp’s honour) was destroyed by the local tribespeople, but a new settlement was founded nearby at Freetown in 1792, from which grew the British colony of Sierra Leone (Wilson 1976).

Sharp wrote over sixty books and pamphlets on a multitude of subjects, and published ‘Regulations’ for the Sierra Leone settlement, predating by several years his 1794 ‘General Plan’. Both sold well, the ‘Regulations’ going into three editions and the ‘General Plan’ being revised in a second edition in 1804. They are worth examining together for the early years his 1794 ‘General Plan’, one of the immediate sources for public purposes.

The ‘Regulations’ prescribe a system of government based upon the ancient Anglo-Saxon ‘mutual frankpledge’ or ‘freemen’s association’, given by all the householders, for themselves and each other, in exact numerical divisions of tens and hundreds (1788), which anticipate those used in South Australia. The Sierra Leone settlers were to be ‘restrained from purchasing land for private Property until the Bargains for the Publick Land are concluded’, and the site was to be found and laid out by an ‘Agent-conductor’ (a similar role to that of Light as Surveyor-General in South Australia). The ‘Regulations’ also contain an elaborate formula intended to reserve over a third of the laid-out land for public purposes.

By the time he came to write his ‘General Plan’, several years later, Sharp had suffered the disappointment of the destruction of his brainchild, the unprotected Granville Town. The ‘Regulations’ had not included any guidance on defence or physical layout, but in the 1794 plan Sharp included an encircling belt of defensible common land - the parkbelt, although not so called. Sharp made it clear that this common land should include ‘small redoubts of Earth or Sod, for the out-Posts of the nightly Guard’, ‘Parishes or entrenchments to command the general Avenues’, and an encircling dike and ditch ‘which will enable the Inhabitants to defend themselves against very superior forces of Invading Chiefs or Deserters. The island had to defend itself against such periodic attacks, although in South Australia the settlers found the aborigines unthreatening, and indeed were more concerned to stop them camping (like gypsies on common lands in 20th century Britain) on the parklands (Hamer 1990, p. 216).

The real ‘T. J. Maslen’ and the parkbelt idea

After the Sharp plan, one of the immediate sources for the Adelaide parkland concept was the book, The Friend of Australia (1830), by T. J. Maslen, which recommended that in new settlements a ‘belt of park’ would ‘greatly contribute to the health and pleasure of the inhabitants’. Williams (1747) identified ‘Maslen’ as a pseudonym for Allen Francis Gardner, but hidden in the publication, and later sources (O’Byrne 1841, Ward 1885 and Anon. 1951) help to uncover his curious and unhappy story.

Allen Gardner (1794-1853) served in the navy from 1808 to 1826, seeing active service in the East Indies and off the South American coast. He rose to the rank of Commander in 1826, but was placed on half pay because of the lack of peacetime employment, and then wrote The Friend of Australia. An evangelical Christian convert and restless wanderer, he went off to undertake missionary work after the death in 1834 of his young wife (who was a member of the Reade family, of Ipswich, Oxfordshire, as was the later ‘town planning missionary’, Charles Compton Reade). His missionary endeavours seem to have been remarkably accident-prone. His mission station in Zululand was destroyed by the Boers, and a sojourn in the Falkland Islands (1841-3) ended with his goods stolen and his life threatened. In 1844 he helped form the Patagonian Missionary Society, and led three abortive missionary expeditions into the Indians of Tierra del Fuego, which ended in the death of all seven in his party from hunger and exposure. Gardner himself was probably the last to die, on the sea-shore by his upturned boat. The tone of his diary in his last days (‘Yet a little while and through grace we may join that blessed throng to sing the praises of Christ through all eternity’) suggests a death doing Christ’s work was what he had been seeking.

Gardner’s interest in planning seems, therefore, to have been superseded by his missionary endeavours. After writing The Friend of Australia he does not appear to have been active in the Wakefield colonisation movement, and when the South Australia colony was being launched he was in Nataf founding a mission station. He subsequently incorporated his Friend of Australia material into another book, Suggestions for the improvement of our towns and houses (1843), apparently written after his return from the Falklands but before he became involved in his fatal Patagonian adventure. It contains little new on the parkland idea, but his view of the moral basis for town improvement is worth quoting:

‘An opinion has for some time being gained ground with the reflecting portion of the public, that something must be done to better the condition of the labouring classes, who are becoming so exceedingly numerous by the increase of the population, that their numbers alone are embarrassing, at the same time that their reverence for superiors, and respect for the classes above them is evidently much weakened, and likely to be succeeded by vindictive feelings and hatred, springing from their miserable condition, and what little education they may have, not being based upon a religious foundation’ (1843, pp. vi-vii).

Roebuck, the Radicals and the parks movement

More significant in the parklands history than Gardner, but hitherto unrecognised in that connection, was the radical writer and politician, John Arthur Roebuck (1801-79). A Utilitarian, disciple of Jeremy Bentham and friend of John Stuart Mill, he was one of the noisiest of the young radicals returned to Parliament after the 1832 Reform Act. In 1835 he and other radicals published a volume of essays under the title of Pamphlets for the People (Roebuck 1835). Included was his 11-page essay, probably dating from June 1835, ‘On the Amusements of the Aristocracy and of the People’. This attacked the government of the day for its restrictions on the leisure pursuits of the working classes, by repressive measures such as enclosing village commons, charging admission to Vauxhall Gardens, and stopping up public footpaths.
This was part of an active campaign at the time to provide more public open space. In 1833 a Select Committee on Public Walks had considered 'the best means of securing Open Spaces in the Vicinity of populous Towns and Public Walks and Places of Exercise calculated to promote the Health and Comfort of the Inhabitants' (Chadwick, 1966, pp. 49-52, Bunker & Hutchings, 1986, p. 15). In 1835 the M. P. James Silk Buckingham (1786-1855), also a new towns enthusiast unsuccessfully proposed a Bill for establishing public gardens in towns and villages, and Roebuck himself in 1838 pressed in Parliament with Joseph Hume (1777-1855) to require open space provisions in all enclosure bills (Hyde 1947). The movement continued to be influential through organisations like the Commons Preservation Society (founded in 1865) and the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association (founded in 1883), leading to the various Open Spaces Acts between 1897 and 1906 (Aalen 1989).

Roebuck's essay cited Lord Egremont's estate at Petworth as an example of the public open space he was advocating, in a passage which is a good example of his abrasive pen (as late as 1836 the phrase 'Don't John Arthur Roebuck me' was used in his sometimes constituency by those who felt they were being unfairly attacked in argument - Baylen & Grossman 1984, p. 457):

'The townspeople, all alike, had the privilege of walking and playing at cricket in the park. I saw them there after their work, assembled in groups on a fine evening in summer; they were all neatly and comfortably dressed; young and old, girls, boys, men and women, scattered over the large and beautiful park, shouting, laughing, happy and contented... But these scenes have almost passed away; and pretended sanctity, an hypocritical regard to morality, proscribes these assemblies of the people. We inclose the commons; we thunder damnation against profanation, we preserve a rigid and sanctimonious exterior; we compel the people to herd together and hide themselves in the public house; we talk about our own morality and decorum; subscribe to pretended sanctity, an hypocritical regard to morality, proscribes these assemblies of the people.'

Current Green Belt policy, however, reserves a broad zone kept free of development, rather than a public park, and much wider than the parklands as originally advocated. In his 1830 book Gardiner suggested 'about a mile or two in diameter', but by 1841 had reduced this to 'a little half a mile in width', while Granville Sharp had been content with even less; 'Common land round the Town 110 Yards broad or half a Furlong broad' (1794). Roebuck in 1836 added a clause to a Common Field Enclosure Bill exempting common fields from enclosure within a radius of 10 miles of the built-up area of London (Hyde 1947). By the 1860s, when Green Belts had become one of the strongest planning policy instruments in England and Wales, they were 10-15 miles wide - far too great a land area to be reserved for public open space. Now that some criticism is being voiced of the Green Belt concept (Herrington 1990), perhaps some further historical research into its origins would be appropriate.

Roebuck was an active supporter of the South Australia colony (Pike 1952-3 and 1957), and would presumably have met Light, whose close friend, William Napier, had preceded him (Roebuck) as the Tory M. P. for Bath. Light himself was in Britain for only a few months (February-May 1836) between returning from Egypt and sailing for South Australia. While receiving his instructions from the Colony Commissioners at their offices in the Adelphi, overlooking the Thames, he would doubtless have seen the newly re-opened St. James' Park, an example of enlightened public park provision which had been extensively remodelled between 1828 and 1835 and laid out for public use (Chadwick 1866, pp. 33-4). John Nash's Carlton House Terrace had also been built between 1827 and 1832, and it may well be that the view across St. James' Park helped inspire Light's vision of the future on the River Torrens (Weinreb & Hibbert 1983).

Park belts and Green Belts

The parkbelt idea as implemented in Adelaide has been an important influence on the Green Belt concept. Adelaide was the only plan of an existing city to be illustrated in Ebenezer Howard's Garden Cities of Tomorrow. He cited it as an example of public parks being protected against development, with the city growing by 'leaping over' the parklands (Howard 1946, p. 140). In 1910 Pepler recommended a 'green girdle', or concentric ring of parkland for London, from which (via Unwin) evolved the Green Belt idea (Mattocks 1937, Collins 1956-7, Sharp 1980, Miller 1989).

The protection of parklands against development pressures would also repay further research. Williams (1966) noted the disappearance of park belts in New Plymouth and Christchurch, New Zealand, either because Maori hostility forced the settlers to move closer in, or because weak finances of the colonisation company forced land sales for development. In South Australia such pressures were not strong, and parkland protection has enjoyed strong public support in Adelaide since at least 1912, when the Mayor stopped the Commonwealth Government from building a barracks there (Hutchings & Bunker, 1986, p. 59, footnote 5). A report in the Adelaide Advertiser of 25 May 1990 disclosed that, of the 930 hectares set aside by Light as parklands, about 700 remained, the rest having been gradually lost, particularly to transport facilities (railways, bus depots). Any further such losses, however, are unlikely, and the government is committed to reinstating parklands uses where possible.

Author's note

The author wishes to express his thanks to Alan Hutchings and John Trenegga for their hospitality and stimulating research suggestions during his short stay in Adelaide in May 1990. It was John Trenegga who first drew his attention to the contribution of John Arthur Roebuck to the parklands concept.

References


Sources

34. County Council. The LCC established a fund of £2 millions out of which grants were given to adjoining authorities towards the purchase of open land or paying the compensation necessary to sterilise land from future development by extinguishing development rights. Grants were to be 50% of purchase price or 100% of sterilisation costs, payable once satisfactory restrictive covenants were in force on the land. Full legal authority for such actions was granted under the Green Belt (London and Home Counties) Act 1935, which removed various ambiguities in the original scheme. The particular mechanism adopted reflects the weak state of planning legislation at that time. The 1947 Town and Country Planning Act and subsequent legislation greatly eased the position regarding the sterilisation of land without the necessity for purchase or payment of large compensation for the loss of development value.

The Morrison green belt differed from Unwin's green girdle proposals in that it was not a continuous belt. It was intended rather as a reserve of open spaces and its form was determined rather by the practicalities of securing suitable land for purchase than any pre-conceived notion. However this did not prevent Unwin from being very enthusiastic about the scheme. Other British cities began tentative moves in the same direction during the late 1930s, proceeding by a combination of voluntary and municipal action, but nowhere were the initiatives so formalised as around London.

Morrison was very sympathetic to the whole of the strategic regional planning message with its emphasis on planned decentralisation as well as metropolitan containment. Ever since his experiences as a conscientious objector in Letchworth Garden City during the First World War, he had been drawn to garden city planning philosophy. Frederic J. Osborn, the formidable garden city propagandist, was an old personal friend. During the years before Labour gained power on the LCC Morrison had consistently pushed containment and decentralist ideas in the party. Municipal power brought the opportunity to implement a significant part at least of such ideas and to contribute to a wider re-evaluation of planning policies.

Thus in 1938 Morrison gave evidence to the Royal Commission on the Distribution of the Industrial Population that broadly embraced the decentralist strategy for London and accepted that the capital was too big. (His friend Osborn put an even more comprehensive case on behalf of the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association.) As Deputy Prime Minister in the post-war Labour Government, Morrison was undoubtedly instrumental in giving early emphasis to New Towns in the legislative programme.

The Fairy Ring

Drawn by Bernard Partridge

This appeared as the main cartoon in the famous British humorous journal Punch on January 20th 1935. Its theme is the initiation of the London green belt scheme by the newly Labour-controlled London County Council (LCC). The central figure is Herbert Morrison, leader of the Labour group, portrayed as Oberon in Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. He is shown asking the assistance of Puck in implementing his ambitious green belt proposals, echoing Puck's famous boast that he could 'put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes'.

During the 1930s Herbert Morrison became one of the most famous local government leaders of England, partly because of his personal style, but not least because of his dramatic innovations in planning policies for the capital. After a long period of inertia, Labour under Morrison put the whole of the county of London under planning control and pressed ahead with the creation of a green belt outside the county itself. The idea of a green belt or girdle around London was not new and had been proposed in various forms since the beginning of the century. The most recent and authoritative articulation of the proposal was by Raymond Unwin through his reports for the Greater Regional Planning Committee in 1929-33.

Under the adopted scheme, the green belt was to be achieved by extensive purchases of land both directly by the LCC itself but also in conjunction with other authorities, particularly the adjoining Middlesex.

Cartoons

Stephen V Ward

Oxford Polytechnic

This issue marks the beginning of an occasional series on sources that focuses on the cartoon as a source for planning historians. Readers are warmly invited to contribute to this section and should supply both the cartoon and an accompanying text to interpret the source. Non-British contributions are specially welcomed.
However the detailed implementation of the New Towns programme fell to one of his old local government colleagues, Lewis Silkin, the Minister of Town and Country Planning and chairman of the LCC's Housing Committee during the late 1930s.

Further Reading


Publications

Abstracts


This volume, a broad and substantial text, traces the changing intersection of the local economy and local politics through the eras of mercantile democracy, industrial democracy, and postindustrial democracy. The book goes beyond the historical development of the urban political economy to provide a conclusion that looks forward to the future of the American city and the place of federal policy.


Making Better Citizens explores the changing nature of housing reform from a focus on providing better dwellings for the poor between 1890 and 1915, to making better citizens of the city's wage-earner population through developing wholesome neighbourhoods, and then a return emphasis on housing the poor in the 1950s to facilitate urban renewal. The book focuses on the 1915-1960 era when what Fairbanks calls the community development strategy both determined the form and focus of housing reform, including early public housing programs. The book not only evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of this approach, but uses it to suggest that 'house's and planners shared more in common than is usually supposed.'


This provocative book argues that the spatial and social structure of Chicago is the result of conscious, planned efforts, not by the public sector but by the private sector. Moreover, the book suggests that the private sector efforts have operated similar to a 'confidence game.' It traces how private interests have elicited public support through manipulation to the point of overcommitment, so the city could not back out even if things went awry. To develop such a thesis, the book explores a variety of case studies of land use change in Chicago.


By reference to the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, the German Democratic Republic, Albania, Yugoslavia and Hungary, the contributions to the volume highlight the considerably differing degrees of priority given to housing in Eastern Europe, and describe trends in housing conditions and construction since the war, the relevance of factors external to the housing market, and the broad distinctions and similarities in the situation of east and west Europe.

F. H. A. Aalen, The Iveyagh Trust, The First Hundred Years, 1890-1990, Iveyagh Trust, 1990, 100 pp., including 39 plates and 9 figures, IR£23.00.

The Iveyagh Trust is one of Ireland's major philanthropic organisations and played an important pioneering role in the provision of improved housing and amenities for working-class people in Dublin. This book, written to mark the centenary of the Trust, provides an account of the organisation's substantial achievements since it was founded by Sir Edward Cecil Guinness (later 1st Earl of Iveyagh) in 1890. By placing the origins of the Trust in a wide historical context and showing how the character and layout of the areas around St. Patrick's Cathedral were influenced by its building activities, this book contributes not only to the history of Irish housing and planning but to the social and historical geography of Dublin.

The contents of the book include chapters on the following topics: the historical context; the formation and purpose of the Trust; early sites and buildings, 1890-1915; Trust activities, 1903-90; future prospects.

Copies of the book can be purchased from the Manager, Iveyagh Trust, Bull Alley, Dublin 8.


The book is a record of five lectures given in 1989 as part of Hertfordshire County Council's centenary celebrations. The theme of the book is derived from the fact that the county accommodates two garden cities and four postwar new towns. In the first paper, David Hall provides an overview and policy context, followed by appraisals by Robert Bevers and Michael Hebbert respectively of the parts played by Ebenezer Howard and F. J. Osborn. Finally, Mervyn Miller for Letchworth and William Allen for Welwyn each look at the distinctive architecture of the two original garden cities.


This book, in the words of the authors, 'is written from the integrity of a defined and particular viewpoint, that of the urban geographer'. It employs spatial analysis to discern patterns and explanations of urban growth and change. Themes investigated include the nature of the spatial transformation that occurred in the nineteenth century, the demand for and supply of urban space, and details of controls and constraints on development. An extensive bibliography is included.


This paper is the text of a lecture delivered at the Dundee planning school. It reviews the present dilemmas of British planning against the backdrop of its twentieth century development. The author concludes that planners will have to become enablers and negotiators rather than being aloof rationalists or guardians of the public interest as they have aspired to be in the past.

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