Planning History
Bulletin of the
International Planning History Society

Editor
Dr Stephen V Ward
School of Planning
Oxford Brookes University
Gipsy Lane Campus
Headington
Oxford OX3 0BP
Telephone: 0865 483421
Telex: G83147 VIA
Fax: 0865 483559

Editorial Board
Dr Gerhard Fehl
Lehrstuhl fur Planungstheorie
Technische Hochschule Aachen
5100 Aachen
Schenkelstrasse 1
Germany

Dr Kiki Kafkoula
Dept Urban & Regional Planning
School of Architecture
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
Thessaloniki 54006
Greece

Professor Georgio Piccinato
Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia
Dipartimento di Urbanistica
30125 Venezia Santa Croce 1957
Italy

Dr Halina Dunin-Woysesth
Oslo School of Architecture
Dept of Urban Planning
P O Box 271
3001 Drammen
Norway

Professor John Muller
Dept of Town and Regional Planning
University of Witwatersrand
Johannesburg
P O Wits 2050
South Africa

Dr Robert Freestone
School of Town Planning
University of New South Wales
P O Box 1
Kensington NSW 2033
Australia

Dr Pieter Luytenhove
Open City Coordinator
(Urban Planning and Architecture)
Antwerp 1993 v.z.w.
Grote Markt 29y
B-2000 Antwerp 1
Belgium

Professor Shun-ichi Watanabe
Science University of Tokyo
Yamazaki, Noda-shi
Chiba-ken 278
Japan

Professor Gordon E Cherry
Geography Dept
University of Birmingham
P O Box 363
Birmingham B15 2TT

Professor Michael Ebner
Dept of History
Lake Forest College
555 North Sheridan Road
Lake Forest
Illinois
IL 60045-2399
USA

Production
Design: Rob Woodward
Word Processing: Sue Bartlett
Printing: Middlesex University Print Centre

Planning History is published three times a year
for distribution to members of the International
Planning History Society. The Society as a body
is not responsible for the views expressed and
statements made by individuals writing or
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Editorial

When I first became editor of Planning History in 1991, I was particularly uncertain about what to write in the editorial, the showcase for my new role. The editor's page seemed to call for some magisterial statement, full of wise insights and nicely balanced comment on the state of planning history. Accordingly I struggled to achieve a profoundly commensurate with the huge importance of what had become (as Lord Gnome, mythical proprietor of the British satirical magazine, Private Eye, might have put it) my organ. Not surprisingly I never met with any great success in these early struggles.

Fortunately however, it soon dawned on me that this rather pompous approach was completely misconceived. The distinctive feature of Planning History is that it is a direct extension of the International Planning History Society (until recently the Planning History Group). It is not some forlorn scholarly journal, bound by tight academic conventions and formal procedures. It is better understood as a medium through which people, particularly members, can, with a minimum of fuss, talk usefully and sensibly to each other about planning history. The ideal therefore is that its style should be as close as possible to the way we would communicate if we were together in the same place. The recognition of this allowed me simply to think of the editorial as being more informal, rather like a series of open letters to my friends. Certainly they became a lot easier to write when I began to think of them in this way. And I have some evidence at least for thinking that they were received in that way, when members commented on them in their letters to me or, as with David Whitham's piece in the present issue, my initial comments encouraged others to develop the points further.

It is therefore with sadness that I realise that this, my tenth issue and ninth editorial, is the last of these open letters that I shall write. As mentioned in my last editorial, the next issue you receive will be edited by Michael Harrison of the University of Central England. There are of course advantages in a regular rotation of editorial responsibility is that IPHS is less likely to be challenged to bear the full costs. But readers should be under no illusions that if we are ever charged the real costs of producing the magazine its price to the readership will rise appreciably. It will be interesting to see whether the University of Central England follows Middlesex and Oxford Brookes University in never quite pinning down these costs (I should add that my own Head of School, while understanding the costs, has always been extremely supportive and is sad to be losing Planning History, despite its call on the School's human and other resources).

One thing I will certainly miss is the opportunity to highlight important work and bring it to wider attention. I have most enjoyed being able to bring promising work in progress quickly into print. My last issue is no exception to this and I would particularly mention Peter Scott's interesting work on industrial estate planning, too long neglected. Although Peter teaches business history, his researches, which include a history of UK property development, have much to offer planning historians. I hope we may see a more extended version of his work in print before too long.

Finally, on the subject of extended versions of work published in these pages, I must mention Miren Block, recently published by Yale University Press. (This was the first book to come to my attention in my new role as one of the Reviews Editors of Planning Perspectives, stepping, incidentally, into the shoes of John Snaill, an ex-editor of PH's precursor, basically just photocopied. I take this opportunity to thank them on your behalf for their invaluable contribution.

Yet rotation also allows new ideas to develop and limits any tendency to editorial self-indulgence that may creep in over time. (The reader may well detect such tendencies in the present issue). Michael, I know, is giving thought to redesigning aspects of the magazine. I was happy to take over and develop the format pioneered by my predecessor, Dennis Hardy and so ably supported by Steve Chilton of Middlesex University. (I must also mention, with grateful thanks, Steve Chilton's continuing assistance in finalising each of my ten issues for printing at Middlesex). Yet it is probably time for a change and I look forward with interest to seeing my successor put his ideas into practice.

He will inherit a magazine that is extraordinarily good value (no false modesty here) - as it always has been. The fact is that it benefits by a good deal of labour and other services which are in effect donated free by the host institutions. Another advantage of the regular rotation of editorial responsibility is that IPHS is less likely to be challenged to bear the full costs. But readers should be under no illusions that if we are ever charged the real costs of producing the magazine its price to the readership will rise appreciably. It will be interesting to see whether the University of Central England follows Middlesex and Oxford Brookes University in never quite pinning down these costs (I should add that my own Head of School, while understanding the costs, has always been extremely supportive and is sad to be losing Planning History, despite its call on the School's human and other resources).
Notices

Planning History As Logo

South Australia's Environment, Resources and Development Court

The design of the logo is simple but unique. The leaf represents the environment. The water drop represents resources. Light's 1836 plan for Adelaide represents development. This plan is a well known international symbol of South Australia among urban and regional planners.

The classical proportions of the design mean that it should stand the test of time.

South Australia's Environment, Resources and Development Court commenced operation on 17 January 1994.

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The London Exchange

70 Cowcross Street

London EC1M 6BP

UK

Tel: 071 253 1171; Fax: 071 250 3022

Director: Esther Caplin

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Planning and the Land Question

Jim Yelling, Birkbeck College, University of London, UK

Introduction

In his pioneering study of the Genesis of Modern British Town Planning (1954) Ashworth followed the conventions of the times in stressing pragmatic responses to practical circumstances - notably those connected to new public health and sanitary issues arising in major industrial cities. More recently, studies by Cherry and Suttill, as well as a number of major biographies, have brought the intellectual origins more to the fore. Beavers, for example, outlining the various strands brought together in Ebenezer Howard's thought, includes prominently among them the influence of the land nationalisers Alfred Wallace and Revd. Fleming-Williams. He claims, indeed, that "the Garden City Association was originally founded around a nucleus of members of the Land Nationalisation Society." Equally, the National Housing Reform Council, which played such a large part in the origins of the 1909 Act and then became the National Housing and Town Planning Council, developed initially from the activities of two "yellow van committees" formed by the Land Nationalisation Society (LNS) among miners leaders in Northumberland and Durham as a result of the proselytising activities of its Assistant Secretary, Henry Aldridge.

These events highlight the impact which strongly committed individuals or small groups can have in instigating change. Classically, this impact is most important at the beginning, while later growth may even depend on consolidating such origins in the interests of appealing to a wider membership. Instead, there is emphasis on pragmatic or 'practical' concerns more attractive to those in a position to influence implementation, and certainly in obtaining the 1909 Act of founding Letchworth events followed such a course. However, an equally well-known feature of planning history is that ideas rejected as impracticable at one moment may become commendable at another, if generally political circumstances are sufficiently changed.

The Rise of the Land Question

From that point of view it must be significant that the formative years of town planning in Britain were those when the 'land question' was at its height, and that the stock of ideas which then emerged in the two fields continued to influence each other down to, and including, the reformulation of planning that occurred in the 1940s. As it happened, political circumstances never changed sufficiently to bring the wider schemes of land reform into being, but they did change sufficiently to allow narrower advances, including those obtained within the field of planning. Planning may be said to have obtained some benefit from being able to offer positions of compromise on these matters, but it could only do so provided that land reform principles were developed in such a way as to enable this to occur. It is not self-evident that this should be so, and one is bound to ask what it was that drew the land nationalisers to such an activity as planning, or planners to a concept of land nationalisation? And how did the general state of relations between ideas in the fields of planning and land reform develop over this period?

The land question as it arose in the late nineteenth century evidently drew to some extent on populist notions: stirring the anti-landlord feelings at present in some urban and rural areas, and targeting the wealth and power of the great ground landlords. Intellectually, however, it developed as a classically liberal project - the promotion of a decisive intervention in one area of social affairs which would enable the rest to continue on liberal lines. Thus while land reform obviously posed a major threat to property interests, it also usually offered the more comfortable thought that if this were done, then the major economic and social problems of the day could be largely overcome, and individual liberty reconciled with communal economic and social needs. Both of the two main branches of thought within land reform thus made contact with impeccably establishment ideas. That centred on the taxation of land values notoriously drew on classical economics and strongly appealed to those whose support for free trade could not counteract any form of monopoly. The land nationalisations on the other hand, as beetled by their founder and President, were more concerned with the social organisation and political power. Control over land was the most effective point at which a line could be drawn between the community and political power on the one hand, and the individual and economic law on the other. There was often a very traditional view of the kind of positive social interaction that could come into being once the imbalances of wealth and power set

Land taxation and planning before 1914

Although its links with planning were always more indirect, the land taxation branch of the movement needs first consideration as it was the more powerful movement in the wider sphere of politics. Essentially, this was because the LNS schemes involved land purchase, and hence the compensation of landlords, while land taxation held out the prospect of an immediate financial return. The proponents of land taxation were, indeed, particularly alert to the questions of compensation and betterment as they affected landowners. Thus in the London County Council (LCC) it was the land taxers within the Progressive Party who struggled to introduce betterment clauses into legislation, and to oppose slum clearance and street improvements which involved large compensation to landlords. It is often overlooked, moreover, that one of the most important clauses in the 1909 Act, enabling low-density zoning to be imposed without compensation, was not in the original Bill, but came about through an amendment...
The Planning: emergence of town planning in Britain. Cheap land, compensation, all connected to traditional liberal explain the reduction of costs, the powerful effects of values, and their schemes on existing cities in terms of the benefits that would arise from major reductions in rents and property values.

The existence of a large 'unearned increment' to land in major urban areas was common ground to all land reformers, but particularly emphasised by the economic orientation of the land tax campaign. Henry George had argued that the taxation of this increment would break up landlord power, but more immediately, it offered another potential source of national and local government revenue, in the latter case through the introduction of site value rating. The effects of such a system in terms of planning were ambiguous, and much dependend on an assessment of whether landlords could shift the burden of the tax onto occupants. Generally speaking, however, before 1914 most opinion connected with planning believed that the impact of site value taxation would be to favour decentralisation. The concept of rent as unearned increment itself helped in this urban case on the degree of metropolitan conferred by location. In so far as the site itself generally had a higher value relative to improvements as the centre was approached, then the effects of a land tax would be to relieve the suburbs at the expense of the centre. Moreover, by extending land taxation to undeveloped land around the urban fringes, it was argued that a powerful financial mechanism would be in place to ensure that building land came onto the market in increased quantities, and hence at a lower price. For this reason too, the land nationalisers at the turn of the century found little difficulty in supporting site value rating. Charles Booth advocated land taxation to spur dispersal, while remaining opposed to municipal landownership. William Thompson could find room for both projects within a Fabian perspective of the organised redistribution of the people.

Planning and the land nationalisers

While the LNS supported many of the proposals of the land taxers, there were also reasons to question the effects of purely financial measures on the system of landholding. Instead, they emphasised the political power of landlords to control developments on their land, resulting in an inevitable conflict of interest between owners and tenants: "what the occupier regards as the best use of land is diametrically opposed to the view which is naturally taken by the owners." Thus "the very essence of the system led to permanent landlords in great estates, but that it is treated as private property at all."

Proposed free trade in land, owner occupation and leasehold enhancement would still exclude the masses. Indeed it was feared that there had never been any absolute right to property in land under English law. The absolute possession of the soil was held by the Crown as trustee for the nation, and should descend to its modern representatives in parliament. The ultimate answer was public ownership because "it implies that the community as a whole, that is to say the actual occupants of the land in their collective capacity, shall decide the uses to which land shall be put." In the meantime, most land nationalisers favoured the municipal unearned increment. It was this which brought such thinking into close relationship with ideas of town planning as well as Ebenezer Howard's "peaceful path to real reform."

The widespread existence in England of a ground landlord-leasehold system of tenure was of major importance in shaping the debate on land reform. To land taxers it embodied the division of property between land and improvements, while for the LNS it offered a year of substituting public ownership for the ground landlord, while the tenants' status would be enhanced by security of tenure, fair rents courts and rights over improvements. The new system, it was claimed would achieve social justice by eliminating the inequalities caused by differential landownership, as well as promoting democracy. Paradoxically, however, this stance brought land nationalisers into some rapprochement with the very system they were attacking. Wallace emphasised the dangers of fragmented ownership - otherwise land around towns might be subject to a process "which formed the hideous slums between Drury Lane and Great Wild Street, now happily demolished." The LNS thus welcomed the decision of some Liberal MPs, led by Lord Haldane to oppose the Leasehold Enfranchisement Bill of 1891. As their Secretary of State, Henry Hyder put it "We have always been told by the champions of private property in land that great estates are better managed than small ones, and there is much truth in the contention...the good of the estate as a whole is more likely to be kept in mind when it is under one ownership.

There can be little doubt that this rapprochement was important to the development of planning in the early twentieth century. The land nationalisers, who were among the earliest advocates of land reform adopted aims of good development that were in many respects similar for those that could be claimed for a well-managed private estate. Little resistance was offered to the notion that some impacts were best dealt with planning, while attention became increasingly focused on fragmented lands. In the early years of the century, the planning schemes that the taxers had helped to promote came into being mostly around the core of a large estate, as at Ruslip-Northwood. Later, the detrimental development of fragmented lands became particularly acute as an issue in the 1930s. By then it was increasingly recognised that decentralisation was not having the universally beneficial effects that had been claimed. For while it did indeed have an effect on the rental value of older urban property, landlords were in a position to recoup some of their losses by lowering maintenance expenditure. The case for large-scale urban redevelopment thus became closely linked to the case for removing a whole lower tier of property from the individual landlord's control and combining it into larger well-managed units. Such schemes were, indeed, put forward as a defence of private property, the most important of these in the planning field being Gibbon's scheme for the compulsory pooling of urban ownership for redevelopment purposes. Given such perspectives, however, it did not need a very dramatic shift in the general political situation to ease the way for the Lutwatt recommendation that the transfer of land into permanent public ownership (of the freehold) should be an essential accompaniment of large-scale redevelopment.

Here, land reformers made headway not through the break-up of estates (which gave their main aim) but at a point of convergence with the existing system, a point of least resistance because the property initially concerned was that which, in a strategic sense, the defenders of private property were most happy to abandon. It still involved a large concession on the part of private interests, however, made possible by the threat that otherwise something more drastic might occur. Similarly, in the analysis of compensation and betterment made by the Barlow and Lutwatt Committees, while land nationalisation is not directly considered, it is clearly present as a polar solution along a dimension on which partial solutions, like those of Gibbon also existed. This was certainly how the matter was put to Lord Latham and Lord Russell by Raymond Unwin. He used land nationalisation and the threat to property of "a much more serious attack when we get a Labour government in the course of time" to advocate a solution which, in effect, involved a general pooling of development values, with compensating transfers between owners. It was from such considerations that Sir Arthur Robersom devised his scheme for the public acquisition of development rights in rural areas, which appeared in the Barlow Report, and was essentially adopted by the Lutwatt Committee.

Planning versus land taxation

While land nationalisation soon lost its claim to be a universal solution to the problems of good town planning, it was notably the control of land was vital to healthy physical and social development. And who could have safety forecast in the late 1940s that their ultimate objective would not be attained? By contrast, the relationship of land taxation planning became much more problematic after the First World War. It had been land taxation that had carried the land question to its brief prominence as a national issue and a line of division between the major parties in 1909-1914. The War and resulting political realignments downgraded its significance, and the only gain to cheer land taxers at this time was the acceptance by the Government in 1919 of site value only compensation in slum clearance. Later, however, the minority Labour Government did briefly revive the issue in the Finance Act of 1931, and the Labour LCC caused considerable furor by promoting a Site Value Rating bill in 1938. All this helped to keep a focus on the special role of land before the public eye. However, in 1931 Raymond Unwin led a delegation from the Town Planning Institute which protested to Snowden about the relative safety of land taxes on cities, and similarly he raised this as an issue in the public debate on the LCC Bill. The LCC interest in land taxation lay mainly in its effects on revenue, and shifting the burden from the working class household. The planning effects were recognised in an Addington critic put in 1938 "whatever may be the needs of society in relation to...speculative building one would not have thought stimulation to be one of them." Moreover, much more attention was now given to the impact of land taxes on redevelopment. For the LCC Latham and Douglas argued that rating land in proportion to the full economic value of the site would "encourage the development of undeveloped sites and redevelopment of poorly developed ones...those in fact that are in the condition of slums." Unwin, however, considered that rating land according to its potential rather than actual usage would favour over-congested redevelopment and the replacement of houses by tenement blocks. By contrast he was not opposed to a tax on incremental values.

Relationships between the land taxers and planning emerged as an issue of the draft proposals and their translation into the 1947 Act. The positions...
they had built up over the years may have had some impact in preparing the ground for the debate over compensation and betterment, and more specifically on the proposed periodic levy in urban areas this being in incremental form. With the abandonment of the levy, it was to be the land taxpayers rather that the land nationalisers who were to make the biggest protest over the provisions of the 1947 Act. A petition organised by the Land Values Group of Labour MPs, and signed by 167 members, was seen as a "pretty direct attack on the whole compensation and betterment policy." Instead, the petition once more put the case for wider taxation of land, arguing that Labour’s social betterment programme "must be conditioned at many points by the method by which the land question is handled." In response, Ministry officials argued that the valuation of sites would delay "a measure of land reform which enables planning to become immediately effective", and that the whole approach showed "a complete lack of appreciation of the real compensation problem as it affects the establishment of any proper system of planning."

The result of this agitation was the establishment of the Erskine Simes Committee on the Rating of Site Values which eventually reported in 1952. The majority report of the Committee argued that the 1947 Act rendered site value rating impracticable except in terms of a rate on values within the major lands laid down in the Act. But going further, they emphasised the gulf that had developed between planning aims and site value rating since the early years of the century. Unplanned outward movement had been "a cause of blighted areas in the centre of towns." Moreover, "much development that has already taken place has been unplanned and haphazard, and this of course would also be true of development stimulated by a change in the rating system. Since the object of the present town planning legislation is not merely to promote development but development in the right place, there has been a corresponding tendency to stress the desirability of direct methods of securing planned development rather than indirect means of promoting it by changes in the rating system."

Although the surge of interest in planning in the 1920s was linked to renewed interest in land and land values, this particular approach was never to be revived, and an essential continuity with the thinking of the late nineteenth century was now effectively broken.

References


11. Ibid., p. 320.

12. Ibid., p. 223.


second garden city project, Welwyn Garden City, founded in 1920, proved successful experiments in planned community development. Both were developed by private companies established for that purpose, though these were not purely profit-making enterprises, each company operating under a limited dividend with any surplus profit going to benefit the town, or its inhabitants.

Letchworth and Welwyn succeeded in attracting the industrial base which was essential to their success by appealing to industrialists who wished to offer a relatively attractive working and living environment to their workforce. These were generally companies in high value-added industries, which required skilled labour and could afford to pay high wages.

The garden city concept also influenced the Corporations of Manchester and Liverpool in their development of Wythenshawe and Speke as satellite towns, combining residential and industrial development. A further, and less widely-recognised, area in which garden city ideas influenced the development of communities, was the growing number of private industrial estate developments.

John Laing & Son’s building estates

The most important developer to systematically incorporate significant aspects of garden city planning ideas in development projects was the building and construction firm John Laing & Son Ltd. Laing’s became active in industrial estate promotion towards the end of the 1920s, prior to which it had concentrated on contract work rather than development on its own account. Estate development was undertaken as part of a programme of integrated development of new communities, combining residential, industrial, and commercial districts. As Sir John Laing’s biographer, R.Coad, stated:

“If the development of such housing estates was to be commercially and functionally successful, other building work would also be needed. John Laing instinctively reacted against the unplanned development, with large housing estates far from jobs and shopping facilities, that marred so much of this period of London’s growth... Unlike some contemporary developers, who went into the booming market under-capitalised and with an eye to quick returns, his company had built up sufficient resources to be able to finance development of both shopping and factory precincts, where they did not already exist near to the new estates.”

In 1929 Laing’s launched their first substantial group of housing developments; two estates at Colindale (Colin Park and Springfield); two at Sudbury (Horsenden and Sudbury Heights); one at Golders Green and one at Woodford. With the exception of Woodford all of these were located in North-west London, an area which was experiencing particularly rapid expansion.

A second wave of housing developments was launched during the early 1930s. These included two estates at Carsons Park; one at Queensbury; two at Mill Hill (Sunnyfields and Parkside); one at Booth Road, Colindale; and other estates at Cranford, Southgate, Shooters Hill, and Purley. The Queensbury estate was the largest of these developments, incorporating two shopping parades, and two factory estates, of 22 and 8 acres respectively. Both offered frontage onto a major, and recently widened, road (Honey Pot Lane) and close proximity to Metropolitan Line tube stations.

By 1937 Laing’s had developed nineteen residential estates, totalling 12,145 houses, in the London suburbs, ten of which were currently undergoing development. Five factory estates were being developed, covering 200 acres; on the Great West Road, Brentford; the Queensbury Estate, Edgware; Harrow Bypass, Elstree; the Harland Estate, Stanmore; and at Golders Green. All of these were adjoining important arterial roads.
Laing's Elstree estate was the most ambitious of the company's inter-war projects, covering over 470 acres, to be developed 'on Garden City lines. In addition to a considerable industrial estate, taking up 130 acres of the development, the site also included the provision of 1,800 houses, so that it will be possible for the workers in the factories to be comfortably housed close at hand under ideal conditions.9

Factories were offered for rent, on long leases, or for sale, and were built in advance of demand in some cases. Factory land was also offered for sale. If industrialists wished to buy factories on the Elstree estate Laing's would provide mortgages at an interest rate of 4.5%, which was equivalent to the rate offered to industrialists setting themselves up at Wythenshawe, and only half a percent above the rate offered to industrialists setting themselves up at Speke.10 The cost difference between establishing factories on Laing's estates in the London suburbs or at Manchester or Liverpool was not, therefore, as substantial as might be expected given the attention that was given to the 'preferential' mortgage rates offered by these authorities.

Though the development of the Elstree estate was cut short by war, evidence indicates that it achieved substantial success in attracting tenants during the relatively brief period between the launching of the project and the outbreak of war. By 1948 there were 30 tenants on the Elstree estate, employing 1,500 workers,11 and evidence from the Laing archives indicates that 21 firms had established factories at Elstree prior to September 1939.12 Laing's used garden city terminology in its promotion of Elstree and their other estates, claiming that the good working conditions offered would lead to improved productivity. As compared with city conditions, this type of "garden estate" factory gets from 5 to 10% more production per person.13

Similar sentiments were expressed by another London-based industrial estate developer, Percy Bilton Ltd, which also developed housing estates in conjunction with their industrial developments. Although Percy Bilton Ltd did not refer explicitly to the "garden city" character of their estates, their publicity echoed many of the themes outlined by Laing's. For example one of their publicity brochures, issued around 1937, was entitled 'Twist Green Fields and the City,' Percy Bilton Model Factory Estates.14

To what extent did the estates developed by Laing's match up to Howard's vision of garden cities? There are obvious differences; the schemes examined above were all considerably smaller in size than the satellite towns envisaged by Howard. They were also somewhat closer to the metropolitan centre with which they were associated. Furthermore they were developed on a commercial basis, for profit, thus failing to meet Howard's aim to channel revenue from land back into the community.

However with respect to the quality, and character, of the living environment, these estates did largely meet the garden city movement. They provided good conditions for workers, who were able to both live and work, in a healthy environment, and were spared the lengthy journeys to work that were the lot of many contemporary suburban dwellers. Laing's built high-quality houses, together with factories of a similarly high architectural standard, located in what were, at the time they were built, semi-rural districts. Furthermore they were laid out in such a way as to incorporate residential, industrial, and commercial zones in the same development, each planned in relation to the other to work as a unified whole.

Control of the entire development also permitted the exclusion of noxious industries, thereby ensuring that a clean environment was left at West Thamesmead, on the north bank of the Thames, as a satellite town. The scheme was marketed as being similar in conception to Welwyn Garden City, though on a smaller scale...

...the land is divided into zones for industrial purposes, both Riverside and inland, zones for residential purposes and also for business and recreational purposes, and open spaces. This planning ensures that the West Thurrock Estate will develop as a self-contained unit or satellite town, close to London but actually outside the London area, in which new industries will provide employment for a growing population which will at the same time be provided with living accommodation and recreational facilities within the area itself, and having an assured market for its products within easy reach.21

This scheme came closer than any other private enterprise to meeting Howard's specifications for the design of a satellite town. However it does not appear to have been a success, very little development actually taking place prior to the Second World War.

A further example of a development with some garden city characteristics was undertaken by Lever Brothers, who had earlier been among the pioneers in this field in developing a model community for their workers at Port Sunlight. In the mid-1920s the company launched an industrial estate adjacent to their Port Sunlight factory, the Bromborough Port estate, developed via an associated company, Bromborough Port Estate Ltd. The estate, which covered 1,247 acres, offered sea access via Lever Brothers' recently established Bromborough Dock, and an estate railway running from the dock to the companies' plants. Of the land established on the estate included oil refineries and manufacturers of margarine, candles, and chemicals. Plants of land on the estate were offered for sale or on lease, with building left to the occupiers.22 The development included housing, 160 acres being reserved for this purpose; some houses had already been erected by 1933.23

Although the promotion of the Bromborough Port estate did not make explicit mention of the garden city concept, it did emphasise the combination of a 'clean' rural environment and urban amenities which the estate offered:

...although enjoying the advantages of a great industrial centre, the Bromboro Port Estate is without the drawbacks of congested building and congested traffic. It is part of a braking peninsula with a splendid bill of health. It enjoys all the natural conditions which make for the well-being of employees and, consequently, for efficiency. It is free from the smoke-laden atmosphere which so often fatigues the worker and contaminates the product. Here, in a word, one can contrive a clean layout in a clean countryside.24

The garden city concept also exerted some influence on the wider development of industrial estates during this...
period, whether by the private sector, local authorities or central government. There were over sixty such estates in Britain by the outbreak of the Second World War, employing approximately 260,000 people.\(^2\) The influence of garden city planning ideas on the design, and, perhaps more importantly, the appeal of industrial estates was expressed by Sir Noel Mobbs, the chairman of Slough Estates Ltd, in evidence to the Royal Commission on the Geographical Distribution of the Industrial Population:

In the older industrial centres houses have ringed the factories, whereas, on the modern trading estate, the industrial section has been kept apart and the domestic section developed on Garden City lines.\(^{26}\)

The 'garden city' element of the industrial estate's design was varied considerably between estates. At one end of the spectrum developments such as Laing's integrated housing and industrial schemes, or the plan to develop West Thurrock as a satellite town, incorporated important elements of Howard's original planning ideas. At the other extreme the government-financed industrial estate companies used the term to represent little more than a good deal of attention to landscaping and aesthetic considerations in wholly industrial projects. However it is clear from the above survey that the ideas of the garden city movement had a much wider impact on urban development during the inter-war period than is indicated by its most conspicuous successes at Letchworth and Welwyn.

**Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank John Laing plc, and particularly their company historian and archivist Alan Thorpe, for access to the John Laing plc archives. I would also like to thank Bilton plc and Slough Estates plc for their help with the research project on which this paper is based. My thanks are also due to Cliff Galvin, Mark Hampton, and Stephen Ward for their comments on earlier drafts of this article. Any errors or omissions are, of course, my own.

**References**

2. Following a financial crisis in 1934 the dividend limit for Welwyn Garden City Ltd was removed.
5. This does not include a considerable amount of contract work for Councils and other bodies.
9. Ibid, p.3.
15. The estates were visited by architectural associations and similar bodies and were noted for their high architectural and building standards.
16. A brochure issued by Laing's to commemorate King George V's Silver Jubilee described the houses they developed on their London suburban estates as 'middle class,' though the fact that a high proportion of these were developed for workers on the adjacent factory estates indicates that they were in fact catering to the affluent section of the skilled working class, who aspired to a middle class lifestyle.
17. Not all the firms established on these estates appear to have been included.
19. That part of London lying outside the County of London, but inside the Metropolitan Police District.
24. Bromborro Port Estate Ltd, *Bromborro Port Estate* (n.d., circa 1929), p.13. Although the company used 'Bromborro' rather than Bromborough in this early leaflet, it had switched to using the longer version of the name by 1933.
25. This estimate is based on a database of British industrial estates during the inter-war period, assembled for the current research project.
Place Marketing: Some Historical Thoughts

Stephen V. Ward, Oxford Brookes University, UK

Introduction

The last two decades have seen worldwide intensification of the practice of place marketing or promotion. Every town, city, region and nation, it seems, is now frenetically selling itself with slogans, advertising, public relations, subsidies, tax breaks of various kinds, 'flagship' developments, urban design, trade fairs, cultural and sporting events, public art and much else. New York State's 1977 campaign 'I Love (Heart) NY' has spawned many imitations. Glasgow, as we have all now learned to believe, really is 'Miles Better'. Spain achieved a triple international place marketing coup in 1992 when Barcelona hosted the Olympic Games, Seville staged EXPO 92 and Madrid became European City of Culture. Meanwhile the collapse of Communism (where it has not precipitated a descent into ethnic barbarism) has signalled the comprehensive entry of the cities and nations of eastern Europe into the place marketing 'game'.

We could easily multiply such examples many times over. As a further symptom, there is already a rapidly growing literature on the subject. In the wake of Bailey's Marketing Cities in the 1980s and Beyond (1999) and Ashworth and Voogt's Selling the City (1990), we now have Kotler, Haider and Rein's Marketing Places (1993), Kearns and Prato's edited collection Selling Places (1993) and Smyth's Marketing the City (1994). These have recently been joined (to declare a personal interest) by Gold and Ward's Selling Places (1993) and Smyth's Marketing the City (1994).

These have recently been joined (to declare a personal interest) by Gold and Ward's edited collection Place Promotion (1994). It seems doubtful that the headline rush into print on this theme will end there, certainly not if I have anything to do with it. Moreover we can detect place marketing concerns permeating books that are ostensibly on other topics.

Place Marketing and Planning Historians

Although there is a little historical material in some of these accounts, their predominant focus is on the contemporary scene. Nonetheless, sufficient has already been written on the history of place marketing to show how much it interpenetrates the mainstream history of planning. This is particularly the case in North America, where urban 'boosterism' has long been acknowledged as a powerful formative factor in the city planning movement. The connection has been somewhat less clearly articulated in Britain, where town planning ideas focused more on health, housing, infrastructure and amenity - the social reproductive functioning of the city - than directly on its economic production function. Yet the connections are there to be made. Planning historians have an important role in exploring and articulating the history of place marketing and its changing relationships with the planning 'mainstream'.

This historical theme has become a long term interest of the author, who is currently researching and preparing a book provisionally entitled Selling Places: Past and Present, for publication probably in 1996. Of necessity the topic has to be considered internationally, though the prime focus will be on British experiences. The remainder of this article sketches some of the arguments as to why place marketing has occurred and recurred in history. We explore some of the major causal factors that have underpinned place marketing regimes in specific geographical locations in particular historical periods.

In addressing this issue, we may usefully draw a broad distinction between two main sets of forces. The first...
can be termed the structural or economic dimension, referring to the predominant processes of economic change within particular urban and regional systems. The second is the ideological/institutional dimension, embracing the broader frameworks of governmental action within these urban and regional systems, together with the dominant ideologies that pervade those frameworks. There are obvious linkages between each of these dimensions, but each typically has a distinctive enough impact on place marketing to be treated separately.

Prentice Sea-Side Resort for HEALTH AND PLEASURE.

Figure 4: An Early Non-Resort Promotional Brochure, published by the famous Cheltenham firm of Burrows for Warwick c.1911.

WARWICK

AS A TRADING, RESIDENTIAL, & EDUCATIONAL CENTRE.

Figure 5: As new settlements, the garden cities at Letchworth and Welwyn were pioneers in 'booster' promotion of non-resort towns.

Why Manufacturers move to
Letchworth (Garden City)

CHEAP GAS AND WATER. GOOD COTTAGES. LOW RATES. CHEAP ELECTRIC POWER. UP-TO-DATE FACILITIES. BRACING AIR. AMPLE & EFFICIENT LABOUR.

Figure 6: Letchworth was a garden city that attracted manufacturers due to its industrial advantages.

Blackpool

LANCASHIRE.

ITS ADVANTAGES AND ATTRACTIONS.

Figure 3: Blackpool was the first British resort to engage in very active marketing. Its 1879 Local Act gave it unique powers to undertake rateborne spending to advertise itself.

Outline History of Place Marketing in Britain

We begin with a brief review of the history of place marketing in Britain. Some would claim to find hints of the practice in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century industrial urbanization, most notably in the association of products and places. Yet there is no real evidence to suggest that this was pursued as a conscious place marketing strategy. It is also stretching a point, in my view at least, to claim that the various attempts to represent, describe or interpret places in literature, art or even topographic guides during this same period had any conscious promotional intent. The beginnings of explicit marketing of the industrial town in Britain appear to date from 1899 when the Borough of Luton and the local Chamber of Commerce together embarked on a new industries programme, issuing a promotional brochure in the following year. Within a few years a number of other centres, of which Derby is the best documented, were doing the same thing, but the scale of this was always very modest indeed compared to contemporary practice in North America10.

There were, however, particular parts of the British urban system where place marketing was occurring on a much more ambitious scale. The new holiday resorts11 and the new residential suburbs were becoming associated with ever more aggressive approaches to place selling by a combination of promoters, including municipalities, railway companies, local business networks and land developers. By 1914 their practices were already much more firmly established than in the industrial towns. In contrast to industrial place promotion, where municipal involvement was still technically illegal, several individual resorts, led by Blackpool in 1879, had secured local powers to advertise themselves and general legislation was under discussion. Ireland (then part of the UK) secured such general legislation in 1909.

After several false starts, general powers finally became available in Britain as the 1921 Health Resorts and Watering Places Act. It was further strengthened by a 1936 Act with the same title. Suburban marketing also continued at a very high level, largely the work of developers, building societies and railway companies12. Meanwhile industrial towns and cities were becoming much more interested in place marketing, even though its legal basis remained very dubious. In 1931, however, the Local Authorities (Publicity) Act gave very limited powers to allow overseas publicity for tourism and industrial development13. Such limitations were widely ignored, leading to a belated and still rather modest flowering of local industrial promotion in the 1930s. Several local authorities were able to underpin their advertising efforts with schemes to develop industrial sites and premises. These were usually of doubtful legality, though Liverpool, Jarrow and Tynemouth had secured explicit local powers by 1939. Fogarty has reported that by 1939 about 85% of county boroughs and 35% of municipal boroughs had some form of industrial development policy14.

Yet from this time, such efforts were eclipsed as centrally directed regional policies under the 1945 Distribution of Industry Act and its successors took precedence over place competition. Resort marketing remained at a high level, however, especially in the 1950s. Meanwhile the new planned projects of the New and later the Expanded Towns entered the place marketing game, building on the earlier marketing precedents of Letchworth and Welwyn Garden Cities15. Until the 1970s, these substantially new entrants to the British urban system were the most prominent players in the place marketing game.

Why Has Place Marketing Been So Untypical of Britain? - The Structural Reasons

The overall historical pattern until the last 15-20 years is then of place marketing increasingly being moderately widespread, but normally being confined to certain specialist parts of the urban system. We can explain much of this in structural/economic terms. Compared to North America, Britain had a long established urban system, predating industrialization16. Moreover industrialization itself was a remarkably spontaneous process, occurring in a country which was already richly endowed with human and natural resources and, very importantly, indigenous capital. There was, quite simply, no need for the vast majority of places to compete for population or capital. The railways, a crucially important formative element in the urban system of North America, were in Britain inserted into an already mature system of urban places. Thus the urban hierarchy of 1801 and certainly 1851 was remarkably similar to that of 1951. London's dominance as the primate city was never remotely challenged but beneath it industrialisation brought a series of regionalised urban systems each involving one or more 'command centre' cities presiding over constellations of production centres. This kind of functional and rank size relationship survived largely
intact until relatively recently, giving Britain a very stable urban system.

The main exceptions to this do, quite literally, prove the rule. The most dynamic elements of the late nineteenth century/early twentieth century urban system were the seaside resorts and the residential suburbs, both products of the revolution in passenger transport initiated by the railways. Here, uniquely in Britain, there was exactly the kind of place competition, the jockeying for position in emergent urban sub-systems, that was one of the most dynamic elements of the late Victorian municipal agenda, the progenitor of town planning ideas, was based on clearing up the mess that local autonomy and largely denied local government a pro-active role in the formation of the local productive economy. Not that this was a role which the municipalities were anxious to assume at this high point of British economic ascendency in the world. The Victorian municipal agenda, the proponent of town planning ideas, was on clearing up the mess that spontaneous industrialisation and urbanisation had created - it was essentially about social reproduction rather than economic production.

Yet when local leaders felt that they needed to use municipal power to attract or develop new industries they found central government obstructive. Successive central ministries responsible for local government took the view that the use of municipal resources to foster place competition was wasteful and tried to ensure it was ultra vires. In the 1950s, however, this preoccupation was temporarily outweighed by another: to avoid decisive central intervention in the highly regionalised depressed area question. In those circumstances central government was prepared to relax its grip, allowing the limited 1950s growth of place marketing that we have noted. But when central government shifted decisively away from laissez faire economic policies in the 1940s, place marketing was brought firmly to heel again, within the framework of national policies.

Significantly too, the relaxation of these same policies since the late 1970s has allowed a new ascendency of place marketing. Under the influence of progressively more powerful political ideologies favouring the market and competition, place marketing has become an integral part of the agenda of municipalities and other agencies concerned with place development and management. Most important among these have been the Urban Development Corporations, created for urban regeneration areas since 1981, and very much the apostles for the new zeitgeist.

Two Contrasting Experiences: the Southern USA and Canada

For much of this period, North American experiences of place marketing contrast markedly with what we have identified in Britain. We concentrate on two, admittedly more peripheral, parts of the North American urban and regional systems: the Southern USA and central Canada, particularly Ontario. While both experienced the types of place promotion that...
have been dominant in Britain, both have a history of much more wholehearted engagement with place marketing across their whole urban systems. The story in both is of an active history of place marketing to attract settlers and capital.

In Canada, this was manifest in earnest from about the 1850s as ambitious municipalities disbursed large ‘bonuses’ in the form of cash payments, tax exemptions and various other forms of assistance including free or concessionary land, power, water, railway links etc. Initially the focus was on railway building, following the 1852 Municipal Loans Act. By 1812 it was estimated that municipalities had raised 7% of the total subsidies given to Canadian railway building, but the proportion had been much higher in the 1850-1880 period, especially in Ontario. Even by 1894 almost 10% of the total municipal debt in Ontario was accounted for by cash bonuses to railways. Toronto alone had a $1 million debt on such bonuses. The experience of other Canadian cities was similar. Thus Montreal, already a big city, and Winnipeg, not yet one, had similarly helped secure their future status by railway bonuses in the 1870s.

Municipal aid to industry achieved prominence a little later, but was also considerable. Bloomfield documents 34 Ontario provincial Acts on this matter, usually attempting some degree of regulation, between 1868 and 1929. Certainly the scale of expenditure was immense by British standards. An 1899 Ontario Provincial survey showed that assistance to industry of some kind had been granted by 12/13 cities, 74/87 towns making returns, 67/122 villages making returns and 69/458 townships making returns. The incomplete expenditure data in this survey show at least $2.3 million worth of assistance to industry, clearly a considerable underestimate. Towns and cities

such as Berlin (later renamed Kitchener), Oshawa and Thunder Bay (then the twin settlements of Fort William and Fort Arthur) were extremely active at marketing themselves as industrial centres. Gradually, however, the scale of financial assistance was curbed, especially in 1922 and 1924. Place competitive energies were expressed more through promotional advertising, which had been legitimised in Ontario in 1897. In the southern USA, however, the history of place marketing followed exactly the opposite course. Following the emergence of a project to build a 'New South' out of the ruins of the Civil War, there was a proliferation of promotional words in the form of advertising and boosterist speech making and editorialising. This was especially pronounced in Atlanta and Richmond. Yet there was relatively little by way of financial assistance for new investments at this time. The critical changes came between the two world wars, when local and state governments became increasingly involved in place marketing.

In Cobb's words the 1930s were a decade of 'frenzied plant-buying' throughout the South. Many of the financial inducements were of very dubious legality, but it was rare for them to be disallowed. In 1936, however, Mississippi launched its 'Back Agriculture with Industry' (BAWI) program which provided a more secure basis for municipal bond funding of industrial development. This avoided the worst excesses of previous funding expedients, which had included direct calls on local taxpayers or wage earners, while still allowing factories the tax exempt status of public buildings. It was a model which was soon emulated across the South and, in time, by all US states.

The selling of the South continued apace throughout the post-1945 period, orchestrated increasingly by the states through still involving a strong local dimension. In Canada, however, the place competitive edge was increasingly blunted as local boosters were brought together with provincial planners in regional development councils. Overall the wider federal and provincial dimension became much stronger, more akin to Britain than the South. Like Britain however place marketing has re-emerged in the economic uncertainties of the 1980s and 1990s.
and separate Confederate nation. It was in fact a vision which continued to permeate promotional imagery for many years. Moreover the South lacked the tariff protection for nascent industries that was provided by the central government, which remained as the family group enjoying the nearby countryside; the motorway and place junction sign; the nearby airport/ port; the modern factory, preferably with the white stereotype of the South as a plantation economy.

Another historic feature of great importance in understanding the often very localised basis of place marketing in both Canada and the USA, more so in the 1920s than in the 1980s. Another, more complex, issue relates to place images and gender. A common theme has been the more or less explicit attribution of femine traits to places seeking to promote industries or attract visitors. Such portrayals were explicit in the case of resorts, particularly as the breakdown of Victorian prudery allowed a bolder approach to the portrayal of women as less explicit attributions of feminine traits to places.

Birmingham. A Site More Than You Might Expect. Given the strong tendency to undermine, desecrate, destroy and desecrate, industrial promotion can also give some pointers as to potential meanings. At a very simple level it is possible to have great fun lampooning place images and slogans - "Do It At Dundee" (1931) remains my all time favourite. More generally, few areas of advertising imagery can be quite so cliche-ridden as place marketing. Particularly common are the hackneyed montages of, variously, the motorway and place junction sign; the nearby airport/ port; the modern factory, preferably with the white coated technician gazing beatifully at some obscure high tech process, possibly supported by other stereotypical workers in suitably harmonious composition; the nicely balanced suggestion of both modernity in shopping and leisure facilities with heritage buildings, the suggestion of attractive housing; the family group enjoying the nearby countryside; the

Figure 14: This recent advertisement stresses the maturity of the cities of the South in the late 20th century.

Figure 15: Typical example of recent UK place advertising. Notice the central emphasis given to the female worker.

hunts, however improbably, of metropolitan delights... and so on.

Yet beyond such caricatures, there are many important themes in the imagery of place promotion that underscore and help us to understand the changing nature of the activity. We can briefly mention two here.

Not the least important is the way in which promotional imagery can 'dispossess' existing populations, while appropriating the traditional meanings of their lives. This has recently happened in the London Docklands and certainly occurred in the past as fishing villages became holiday resorts. The changing meaning of the cog-wheel motif is another symptom - from industrial vitality in the 1930s or earlier to post-industrial heritage today.

Figure 12: Yet the vision of the 'new' was often heavily compromised by the old, as here in 1927.

Final Thoughts

We should not build too much on the foundations of a very short sketch. We have done little more than outline the main economic, institutional and ideological parameters of place marketing regimes. A fuller study would need to explore more carefully the dynamics of the localities which played the marketing game. How was the local booster or regeneration ethos constructed and legitimised? We know from more recent experience that paying to secure the local processes of capital accumulation can be very painful, politically. This is especially so when a community is facing real decline, since the welfare needs of its population and the continued health of existing industries, perhaps themselves experiencing stress, are important. Moreover even successful regeneration may not get the local tax base back to its original position, so that tax burdens will not necessarily be mitigated by new investments, especially if tax breaks are part of the incentives. In theory at any rate the position might have been expected to have been easier for the boosters, working within a more emergent urban system. Yet we know from Canadian experiences that there came a point when established local businesses and populations baulked at further assistance, preferring to see more attention to the social fabric of their towns.

Another important issue is the nature of place marketing imagery and its construction and meaning. The illustrations that accompany this article give some pointers as to potential meanings. At a very simple level it is possible to have great fun lampooning place images and slogans - "Do It At Dundee" (1931) remains my all time favourite. More generally, few areas of advertising imagery can be quite so cliche-ridden as place marketing. Particularly common are the hackneyed montages of, variously, the motorway and place junction sign; the nearby airport/ port; the modern factory, preferably with the white coated technician gazing beatifully at some obscure high tech process, possibly supported by other stereotypical workers in suitably harmonious composition; the nicely balanced suggestion of both modernity in shopping and leisure facilities with heritage buildings, the suggestion of attractive housing; the family group enjoying the nearby countryside, the
the desire of smaller Ontarian towns like Paris and Hanover to secure employment for women largely to correct a male-female imbalance and stabilise through marriage, the male workforce. For somewhat different reasons, such a promotional emphasis is more typical today, the woman is portrayed as an integral member of the place’s workforce.

Yet markedly different patterns can be detected in the past. Thus business leaders in late nineteenth century Luton worried that there was an imbalance in local employment and the town had “the reputation of being a place where the men were kept by the women” 24. Their concern was to attract jobs for men. A few years later Edinburgh was celebrating the absence of married women from the local workforce to the benefit of the home and social life of the (male or unmarried female) worker 25. In other cases the message, though still based on a male conception of worker (and indeed industry), is altogether more subliminal. The place itself becomes female in the sense of servicing the needs of (male) industry, guaranteeing a benefit of structure even to this very element.

Finally must be considered the thorny question of the effectiveness of place marketing. Did places change their destiny by their own promotional efforts? It is extraordinarily difficult to give really credible answers to this kind of question even as it arises before our eyes. To answer it involves elaborate counterfactual arguments that are inevitably partly intuitive. There is a strong temptation always to believe that without a spirited and imaginative promotional campaign things would have been a lot worse. As we noted in the introductory paragraph, the belief that Glasgow really is as British as it is extraordinarily pervasive, even though hard evidence is distinctly thin. Moreover, to answer this question in the longer, historical term becomes much more difficult and the intuitive element inevitably increases. Yet it is important at least to pose the question.

References


7. This distinction is developed further in Ward, S. V. Time and Place: Key Themes in Place Promotion in the USA, Canada and Britain since 1870, in Gold and Ward (eds) op. cit., 1994, pp. 53-74.


Research

The Cambridge Preservation Society, 1928-78

Anthony J. Cooper

Early in 1928 a group of people came together in Cambridge and resolved to form a Preservation Society. They were drawn from both the town and the University, and included prominent businessmen, town councillors and aldermen, Masters of Colleges, academics and officials, both active and retired. They and their successors were to fill some of the most important positions in both local government and in the University.

The group was brought together by a common love for Cambridge and its surrounding countryside, which they wanted to protect from industrialisation and sprawling suburbs. They were also haunted, it seems, by the unmentionable fate of Oxford skin, apparently, to that of the Cities in the Plain, although it was actually the arrival of the Morris car factory at Cowley. Nearer home they were dismayed by the first signs of ribbon development and the garish accessories of motor travel such as petrol filling stations.

Thanks to encouragement and financial assistance from Professor G. M. Trevelyan, an active member of the Society for the rest of his life, the Society swiftly came into existence. Over the last 66 years they have campaigned vigorously to protect the amenities of Cambridge. From the start they made full use of the emerging Planning system, being represented at every important public inquiry. To marry their crowning achievement was their acquisition, by public subscription, of the Wandlebury Estate on the top of the Gog Magog Hills ("The Gogs"), a prominent local beauty spot, and still maintained by them as a country park. They were also pioneers in the preservation of buildings and public footpaths.

Under the auspices of Middlesex University (working for a PhD, in association with Professor Dennis Hardy) I have embarked on a detailed appraisal of the work of the Society over the first 50 years of their existence. By the use of selected case studies I will seek to answer the following questions:

a) What precisely brought the Society into existence?

b) How did they set about their self-appointed task?

c) How, in practice, did they manage to exert influence on the planning and development of Cambridge?

d) To what extent can the Society be said to have achieved their objects over that period?

e) What can the answers to these questions, and the experience of the Society generally, tell us about the whole preservationist movement in this period?

Contact address:
A. J. Cooper
3 Lower Street
Thriplow
Herts SG8 7RJ
UK.

Drancy Revisited

David Whitham

I was interested to read in PH (v. 15, no.1) about the editor’s visit to Drancy because it was a trip I had long promised myself. I had known about Beaudoin and Lodz’ Cîte de la Muette for as long as I had been interested in modern housing. It was described by Catherine Bauer and Elizabeth Denby in the 1930s and visited by a procession of delegations studying European housing, but never occupied: it was shocking to learn of its wartime history as a concentration camp. Simone de Beauvoir’s semi-autobiographical novel, The Mandarins describes an expedition by the narrator and her daughter, armed with binoculars, to Drancy where the daughter’s boy-friend was imprisoned; they believed they could see him at a window.

The importance of Drancy

Drancy’s influence on British housing was far greater than that of anything by Le Corbusier. Its construction, by the Mopin system of steel frame cladding, its integrated servicing whereby hydraulic waste disposal would fuel district heating, and its on-site communal facilities including laundries, creches and schools, provided the model for Quarry Hill at Leeds (Ravetz, 1974), and in the early 1950s for an unbuilt scheme at Newcastle upon Tyne which, like Drancy, would use tower blocks in a suburban development. The structural principle of self-supporting steel frame carrying precast floors and cladding was also applied by Sam Burton in his Scottish housing (Gianinni, 1992).

In October 1993 I was able to visit Drancy. I had been told that one building remained, which is a large five-storey L-shaped court, called Cîte de la Muette on
The local street plan. A memorial garden with the railway truck and the monument commemorating the deportations are at its open south end. At the north end are shops with balcony access flats above, while the sides of the U are stairway access flats over a ground storey of storage and service uses. The block has been refurbished, and though somewhat forbidding is occupied and in good order. The five 14-storey towers and their four-storey 'tails', the subject of most early photographs, have disappeared and been replaced by modern flats.

Henri Sellier and modern housing

In 1932 Henri Sellier, the director, and originator of the suburban development policy, argued strenuously in favour of high-rise flats for low cost housing in the newly founded planning journal _Urbantisme_. The department had built a ten-storey block attached to a shopping centre at Chateyay-Malabry, south of Paris, which was itself predated in 1928 by a 10-storey tower, which also carried a reservoir, at the Belgian cite-jardin, le Logis Floreal.

Photographs show that the towers and their tails were constructed for a structure stiffened with concrete floor and wall slabs which were precast in temporary factories on site. The system was used at the earlier development of Champy des Choeux at Bagneux, also by Beauvain and Lods, for PAX., a state financed housing association.

The technical innovations of Drancy had also been employed in Paris housing. The Mopin system of steel construction used light steel sections bolted together. While conventional steelwork assumed that the frame should carry the whole structure of the building and all live loads, the Mopin frame would provide scaffolding for a structure stiffened and completed by the insertion of concrete floor and wall slabs which were precast in temporary factories on site. The system was used at the earlier development of Champy des Choeux at Bagneux, also by Beauvain and Lods, for PAX, a state financed housing association.

The Charnoy system for water-borne refuse disposal was also used at Bagneux, and in a Seine department scheme at Maisons Alfort, but at Bagneux the dehydrated rubbish was carted away and not burned to fuel a district heating system.

The Cité de la Muette was described in detail by EAA Roswe in _The Architects' Journal_ in August 1934. Photographs show that the towers and their tails were built then and the site cleared for the great court. The plan, however, and Rowse's description, show the concept of the court as very different from the plain U block that exists today, but a much more complex layout, still of five-storey blocks enclosing a sports ground, but also including a covered market, church and social centre, and with school buildings at the south end. This gives more credibly to Marcel Lod's claim, in 1956, that the court was inspired by the great market at Isphahan!

That was in a valediction to Drancy by Francois Lainey and Ginette Baty-Tomikian in _l'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui_ at the time of its demolition, 'only another episode in the history of this haunted place'. Lods, interviewed by Lainey, began by stressing the political dimension:

"The architectural problem posed at Drancy is not a technical, but a political problem: political power decides, and the architects do it."

Lods then explained that the scheme was divided into two separate jobs:

"Beaudoin constructed his houses round a great court, inspired by l'Ile grande d'Isphahan, [Lainey's query] Lods planned the rest - a closed composition with no relation to the pattern of cottage streets which butted 'en impasse' on the enclosing walls."

A second detailed description of Cité de la Muette was provided by a Building Centre team in 1936. Their drawings and an accompanying aerial photograph show the great court structurally completed in its present condition. The report explains that the large court differed from the rest of the scheme in being of concrete frame construction rather than steel, though precast floor, roof and wall slabs were still employed. Whether this was due to experience in the earlier buildings is not discussed, but it might explain the survival of the large court for more that fifty years.

The extensive social facilities planned around the great court must have fallen prey to the financial difficulties.
facing the Seine housing office in the mid-1930s, in the suburban schemes all around Paris new housing was hard to let. When the garden suburbs were planned it was understood that the metro, or city tramways would be extended to serve them, but that was not done. Suburban bus services, like water and other utilities, were privately run, and the companies were reluctant to invest in improvements which would eventually be municipalised. So the new housing was unlikely to attract city workers. Sellier's original studies had demonstrated that suburban residents too, suffered from overcrowding and bad housing conditions, but few of them were likely to exchange their pavilions of banlieu, with their gardens, hens and earth closets, for the sanitary benefits of the Drancy towers. At Plessis-Robinson and other Seine department schemes, arrangements were made for military families to be billeted in the new housing, but apparently such principals failed at Drancy because of opposition by the local council.

L'antichambre de la mort'

In 1940 Drancy was taken over by the Germans as a prison camp. Front Stalag III, an ideal place. Laisney comments, to install 'son appareil repressif', and the court accommodated French and British prisoners of war. Jean-Paul Sartre apparently spent a few weeks there in the spring of 1941 before his release on grounds of bad eyesight. In March 1941 the 'Department aux questions juives' was formed and Drancy was already being prepared as the transit camp for deporting Parisian Jews, though it was not until August that the Jewish quarters in the furniture-making districts of the Xie and XIe arrondissements were surrounded and 4,230 men taken to Drancy. The first deportation, of 1,112 Jews took place on 27 March 1942, to be followed by 78 other convoys, mostly to Auschwitz. Women and children joined the Drancy camp after the notorious confinement of over 13,000 people in the Velodrome d'hiver in July 1942. Drancy was run by the French police under orders from Vichy: a German commandant was appointed only in July 1943. Paternalistic standing orders displayed in the museum explain the management arrangements to be run by the prisoners; a system of room and staircase ordres and trade workshops in the large ground-floor rooms. There was still no water or sanitation in the block and latrines and standpipes for washing were arranged in the court. From the latrines at the south end, a tunnel was excavated in 1943, with the intention of liberating the entire population of the camp, a forlorn hope that was foiled by discovery only a few metres from freedom.

The Drancy camp was in use to the end of the German occupation. The last train of prisoners from Drancy-le Bourget station on 17 August 1944 also carried anti-aircraft guns and the German commandant, but the place was retained by the police, though owned by the housing authority HLM. Still unoccupied it was eventually sold in 1973 to the army for use as barracks and a stadium, but apparently never taken over. The demolition of the eastern section, the towers and their

10. The memorial at Drancy.

children joined the Drancy camp after the notorious confinement of over 13,000 people in the Velodrome d’hiver in July 1942. Drancy was run by the French police under orders from Vichy: a German commandant was appointed only in July 1943. Paternalistic standing orders displayed in the museum explain the management arrangements to be run by the prisoners; a system of room and staircase ordres and trade workshops in the large ground-floor rooms. There was still no water or sanitation in the block and latrines and standpipes for washing were arranged in the court. From the latrines at the south end, a tunnel was excavated in 1943, with the intention of liberating the entire population of the camp, a forlorn hope that was foiled by discovery only a few metres from freedom.

The Drancy camp was in use to the end of the German occupation. The last train of prisoners from Drancy-le Bourget station on 17 August 1944 also carried anti-aircraft guns and the German commandant, but the place was retained by the police, though owned by the housing authority HLM. Still unoccupied it was eventually sold in 1973 to the army for use as barracks and a stadium, but apparently never taken over. The demolition of the eastern section, the towers and their

11. Henri Sellier's tower at Orsainay Malabry.
Building Centre (1936), Housing: A European survey by the Building Centre Committee, Volume I, London.

Denby, Elizabeth (1938), Europe released, London.


Ravetz, Alison, 1974; Quarry at Bobigny-Pablo Picasso from where ensemble of high-rise towers without containing a small exhibition, is open on Saturday afternoons and photographs. (Conservatoire historique du camp world.

promised to help binoculars, a mutilated head seemed even more tragic, the prisoners were kept, brutally crushed that lie. The blonde [Diego's father's mistress] had handed over transmitted messages to an intermediary, and the large ransom paid in vain. (de Beauvoir's My Life, vol.2, The Prime of Life, 456-7).

Deportations from Drancy continued up to 17 August 1944, the German commandant leaving on the last train. Planning history was defined for the purposes of the survey as historical perspectives on the planning of the environment in relation to the origins and consequences of specific planning ideas or sets of ideas, methods and activities.

Planning history has no clear academic home: there is an association of town planning with planning history, awarded by British higher education institutions (both 'old' and 'new') in the period 1970-1990. The survey was encouraged by Professor Gordon Cherry (University of Birmingham), started by Dr. George Gordon (University of Strathclyde), and completed by Dr. Robert Home (University of East London), with financial support from the Society and secretarial support by Czes Bary.

Planning history no clear academic home: there is a strong local focus on the development of the institutional and legislative structures of town planning in the early twentieth century covered in de Beauvoir's My Life, vol.2, The Prime of Life, 456-7.


Appendix

It was springtime and the sky was very blue, the peaches trees a pastel pink. When we rode our bicycles, Nadine and I, through the flag-decked parks of Paris, the fragrant joy of peacetime springtime and the sky was very blue,

Deportations from Drancy continued up to 17 August 1944, the German commandant leaving on the last train.
Urban morphology, particularly residential townscape, has long been a specialization of the School of Geography at the University of Birmingham, and is represented by Stoker (1988), Talbot (1984), Broaderwick (1981) on institutional land uses, and Larkham (1986) on Midlands conservation areas since 1968. Pasmore (1975) examined the roles of owners and solicitors in suburban townscapes changes in mid-Victorian Manchester, identifying family life-cycle as a major motive behind owner’s actions.

Land markets and commercial property development received relatively little attention: Bonshek (1985) examined the origins of Scotland’s housing in the 18th century, while McMahon (1982) took a long view of planning and the development of a land market. Jack Rose (1981), himself one of the post-war British property developers, examined the dynamics of property development from the Industrial Revolution. Freeman (1986), from the Birmingham urban morphology school, compared central area change in two town centres (Aylesbury and Wembley). Thompson (1987), examining the mechanisms underlying townscape evolution in Huddersfield, found that fragmented property ownership within the central area restricted development to small-scale reconstruction, with large-scale owner-occupied buildings limited to the fringes of the historic district. Luftman (1979) applied multivariate analysis to the influence of economic factors on the commercial cores of 34 small towns in Norfolk and Suffolk.

Housing and slum clearance was well represented. Nineteenth century industrialization and urbanization processes were studied in Manchester (1989) on estate buildings in Worcestershire, Trescatheric (1981) on the Furness Colony emigration link with Minnesota, Toplis (1978) on speculative housing in London’s Tyburnia over two centuries. The financing of social housing was examined in Whittle (1990) on charitable philanthropy in nineteen century Preston, and Callinon (1985) on building societies in north Staffordshire (1850-80). For Sheffield, Caulton (1980) used local records such as the deeds registry to analyse the processes of suburban change in the period 1870-1914, while Bacon (1982) examined the rise and fall over a generation of street-deck housing (especially Park Hill). Pearson (1996) examined class and community consciousness in 19th century Leeds. Harloe (1983) is a comparison of private rental housing in six countries (Britain, the United States, Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark and France), finding a form oflessness usually linked to the circumstances surrounding rapid urbanization and industrialization in the 19th century. Jackson (1986) evaluates housing standards. McCulloch (1983) examines the relationship between owner-occupied housing and working class political action through the mortgage strikes of 1938-40.

Scottish housing has been well studied, particularly at the Universities of Glasgow and Strathclyde: McKe (1977) on inter-war working class housing in Glasgow, Robb (1980) on the conflicts in housing between state and owner-occupier. Simpson (1970) on middle class housing in Glasgow’s West End 1830-1914. Ward (1987) investigates post-war housing production in Rose & Cromarty.

In the field of transport we find Newman’s (1976) case study of the Oxford Inner Relief Road, Percival (1986) on the City of London’s elevated Corballs, and Sill (1979) on the origins of skyscrapers in America. Grant’s (1975) comparison of post-war road planning in three county boroughs, and Twinn (1976) probably the first town planner to be a Member of Parliament since W. H. McLean in the 1930s on public participation in road planning. Urry (1986) traces the effects of changing political stances and financial mechanisms upon the roles of the Scottish Office and Lothian Regional Council after the 1975 local government reorganization in Scotland.

Dissertations on industry and employment are relatively few: Campbell (1979) a study of Scottish iron and steel industry location over two centuries, Clarke (1984) on West Midlands industrial location, Pope (1975) on inter-war unemployment in Lancashire, Turok (1987) on local economic development policies since the Second World War.


Planning outside Britain is largely represented by single country studies. In alphabetical order of country we find:

Bilborough (1972), The use of tree plantations as elements of landscape design, with special reference to published texts of the 18th and 19th centuries, PhD, Department of Planning and Landscape, University of Manchester.

Bonshek, J., 1985, Skyscraper property development in Chicago 1832-1892, PhD, Department of Land Management, University of Reading.

Booth, S. A., 1975, National development policy: a critique of the new towns option, PhD, Geography, University of Reading.

Borsay, P. N., 1981, The urban revolution: and landscape and leisure in the provincial towns c.1660-1770, PhD, Department of History, University of Lancaster.

Brederveld, R. F., 1981, An investigation into the location of residential areas in Brussels, PhD, School of Geography, University of Birmingham.


Capper, T. E., 1969, The rise and decline of the industrial colonies at Blackworth, Cark-in-Cartmel and Laixwell between the 18th and 20th centuries, Department of History, University of Lancaster.

Cardoso, A., 1983, State intervention in housing in Portugal 1965-1980, PhD, Department of Geography, University of Reading.

Caulfield, T. J., 1980, The Tents of Shandong: a case study of housing and urban structure in Sheffield c.1870-1914, PhD, Department of Town and Regional Planning, University of Sheffield.

Chen, Z., 1975, The evolution of the national land code of Malaysia: a study into the development of the Torrens system of registration of title to land in Peninsular Malaysia, MSc, Urban Land Appraisal, University of Reading.


Chikowo, W. R., 1988, Housing for the low-income Urban Population in Malawi: Towards an Alternative Approach, PhD, Department of Sociology, University of Essex.


Comparative work includes Britain/Netherlands in Hamnett (1981), Britain/India in Kumar (1981), and Scotland/Colombia in Londono (1978).

It is difficult from a probably unrepresentative survey to identify obvious gaps where future research might go, but here are a few suggestions:

(a) the connections between planning and political theory/ideology,
(b) the role of professional groupings,
(c) the history of individual physical planning concepts or standards, a surprisingly neglected area in view of their importance to post-war planning form,
(d) the historical dimensions to community planning, environmentalism and ‘green’ concerns, and
(e) the international transfer of planning concepts.

Theses notified


Alli, T., 1979, Urban development in Nigeria: an historical exercise, MSc, Urban Land Appraisal, University of Reading.


Bacon, C., 1982, Streets-in-the-sky: the rise and fall of the modern architectural urban utopia, PhD, Department of Town and Regional Planning, University of Sheffield.

Baldwin, D., 1981, The establishment of public parks in Manchester, MA, Department of Planning and Landscape, University of Manchester.

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clarke, D. R.</td>
<td>1984, Industrial Location Policy in West Midlands Region 1974-1984, MA Regional Planning, Department of Social Science and Policy Studies, Coventry Polytechnic</td>
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<td>Crispin, G.</td>
<td>1974, Teaching methods in education for urban and regional planning, MPhil, Geography, University of Reading</td>
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<td>Day, M. G.</td>
<td>1973, Sir Raymond Unwin (1863-1940) and R. Barry Parker (1867-1947): a study and evaluation of their contribution to the development of site-planning theory and practice, MA, Department of Planning and Landscape, University of Manchester</td>
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<td>Day, M.</td>
<td>1990, Local authority high rise housing in England and Wales: a statistical and historical analysis, PhD, Department of Geography, King's College, London</td>
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<td>Dunn, M. C.</td>
<td>1979, Patterns of population change and movement in Herefordshire 1951-1971 and their implication for rural planning, PhD, School of Geography, University of Birmingham</td>
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<td>Edwards, B. W.</td>
<td>1989, Urban design and conservation in Glasgow 1840 - 1901 with particular reference to the Old Town, PhD, Mackintosh School of Architecture, University of Glasgow</td>
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<td>Freeman, M.</td>
<td>1986, The nature and agents of central area change: a case study of Aspley and Wembley town centres, 1935 to 1983, PhD, School of Geography, University of Birmingham</td>
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<td>Gallimore, P.</td>
<td>1985, Building Societies and Housing Provision in North Staffordshire (1850-1880), MA, History Department, Keele University</td>
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<td>Grant, J. A.</td>
<td>1975, An analysis of urban transportation planning and policy making in three county boroughs 1947-1974, PhD, Geography, University of Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gunby, D. S.</td>
<td>1987, The scope and purpose of town planning in Britain: the experience of the second Town Planning Act, 1919-33, PhD, Open University</td>
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<td>Hannett, S.</td>
<td>1981, Urban and regional planning in its institutional context: a comparative study of Great Britain and the Netherlands, PhD, Department of Geography, University of Reading</td>
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**Research**

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<tr>
<td>Hardy, D.</td>
<td>1988, A history of the Town and Country Planning Association 1899-1946, PhD, Geography, London School of Economics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Haugraves, T.</td>
<td>1978, The development of the seaside hotel in Blackpool from 1730 to the present day, MA, Department of Planning and Landscape, University of Manchester</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harloe, M.</td>
<td>1983, Private Rental Housing in Europe and America, PhD, Department of Sociology, University of Essex</td>
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<td>Harrison, R. L. E.</td>
<td>1988, Medieval and modern new towns: a comparative study, History, University College of North Wales, Bangor</td>
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<td>Hutton, S.</td>
<td>1981, Liberal Social Darwinism, PhD, Department of History, University of Lancaster</td>
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<td>Hetherett, M. J.</td>
<td>1977, The evolution of British town and country planning, PhD, Geography, University of Reading</td>
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<td>Hobbs, P.</td>
<td>1989, The response of British town planning to economic change, PhD, Economics, University of Reading</td>
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<td>Hubbard, E. H.</td>
<td>1974, The work of John Douglas 1830-1921, MA, Department of Planning and Landscape, University of Manchester</td>
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<td>Jackson, R. J.</td>
<td>1986, An historical review and present day study of housing standards, MPhil, Environmental Planning, University of Reading</td>
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<td>Jimenez-Huerta, E. R.</td>
<td>1988, State Control and Political Participation in Low-Income Settlements in the Federal District, Mexico, PhD, Department of Sociology, University of Essex</td>
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<td>Jones, H. M.</td>
<td>1988, The history and design of ecological parks in England, and the application of ecological landscape design techniques to the Victorian urban park, MLD, Department of Planning and Landscape, University of Manchester</td>
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<td>Kanaris, M. D.</td>
<td>1985, Economic growth in the Bristol Regional system: early 1950s to mid-1970s, PhD, Department of Geography, University of Reading</td>
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<td>Kellett, J. E.</td>
<td>1983, Public policy and the private garden: an analysis of the effect of Government policy on private garden provision in England and Wales 1918-1981, PhD, Department of Urban and Regional Studies, Sheffield City Polytechnic</td>
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<td>Kummer, D.</td>
<td>1981, British and Indian post-war Towns: a comparative analysis, MSc, Department of Architecture, University of Edinburgh</td>
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<td>Larkham, P. J.</td>
<td>1996, Conservation, planning and morphology in West Midlands conservation areas 1958-1984, PhD, School of Geography, University of Birmingham</td>
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<td>Londono, F.</td>
<td>1978, Land use planning in Scotland, 1929-1977: aspects of relevance to Colombia, MSc, Department of Architecture, University of Edinburgh</td>
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<td>Luffrum, J. M.</td>
<td>1979, Economic factors and the physical form of the central areas of small towns in Norfolk and Suffolk, PhD, School of Geography, University of Reading</td>
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<td>Lukes, R.</td>
<td>1984, The Approach of the Labour Party to Regional Planning &amp; Policy over the years 1964-1984, MA Regional Planning, Department of Social Science and Policy Studies, Coventry Polytechnic</td>
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<td>Mann, P. J.</td>
<td>1989, An historical study of Madresfield and Newfield, Worcestershire: Victorian buildings of the Burscough Estate, MA, Department of Planning and Landscape, University of Manchester</td>
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<td>Maran, Z. H.</td>
<td>1980, Modern town planning in Iraq: a historical treatment, PhD, Department of Planning and Landscape, University of Manchester</td>
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<td>Marques, A.</td>
<td>1980, Public policy formulation: the Brazilian case in the Gata region (1956-1982), PhD, Geography, London School of Economics</td>
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<td>Matiass, D. S.</td>
<td>1990, Ordering the land: the ‘preservation’ of the English countryside 1918-39, MPhil, Nottingham</td>
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<td>McCherry, A. M.</td>
<td>1984, The role of the Highland Development Agency, with particular reference to the work of the Congested Districts Board, 1897-1912, PhD, Glasgow</td>
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<td>McColloch, A. D.</td>
<td>1983, Owner-Occupation &amp; Class Struggle: The Mortgage Stories of 1938-40, PhD, Sociology, University of Essex</td>
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<td>McKee, J.</td>
<td>1977, Glasgow Working-Class Housing between the Wars 1919-1939, MLit, History Department, University of Strathclyde</td>
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<td>Melious, J.</td>
<td>1981, The sources and development of British land legislation 1760-1890, Department of Architecture, University of Edinburgh</td>
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<td>Miller, M. K.</td>
<td>1982, To speak of planning is to speak of Unison: the contribution of Sir Raymond Unwin (1863-1940) to the evolution of British town planning, PhD, University of Birmingham</td>
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<td>Mohd Shukri Bin Haji Abdullah, R.</td>
<td>1986, Rural Development in Peninsular Malaysia 1950-1980: A critique of the Technocratic Approach to Development, PhD, Department of Sociology, University of Essex</td>
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<td>Norris-Nicholson, H. E.</td>
<td>1984, Urban defences and expansion planning in nineteenth century France: Lille, Douai and Cambrai, 1556-1914, PhD, Department of Geography, University of Exeter</td>
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<td>O'Shaughnessy, S.</td>
<td>1970, Some aspects of post war national policies affecting the planning and development of land and buildings in France, MSc, Urban Land Appraisal, University of Reading</td>
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<td>Oldham, C.</td>
<td>1977, Burdens - the development of statutory bodies and their interactions with local institutions 1850 - 1910, MA, History Department, Keele University</td>
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<td>Oyink, J. A.</td>
<td>1988, The changing nature of funding for commercial property development in the UK since the Second World War, MPhil, Land Management, University of Reading</td>
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<td>Panting, A. D.</td>
<td>1987, An appraisal of shopping policies and instutions: since 1960, in an inner area of Newcastle upon Tyne, MTP, Department of Planning and Landscape, University of Manchester</td>
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<td>Papadopoulos, A. C.</td>
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Passmore, R. S., 1975, The Mid-Victorian Urban Mosaic: Studies in Functional Differentiation and Community Development in Three Urban Areas 1841-1872, PhD, Department of Economic and Social History, University of Sheffield

Pearson, R. H., 1896, The Industrial Suburbs of Leeds in the Nineteenth Century: Community Consciousness Among the Social Classes, PhD, School of Economic Studies, University of Leeds

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Simpson, M. A., 1970, Middle class housing and the growth of suburban communities in the West End of Glasgow, 1830-1914, M.Litt, Economic History, University of Glasgow

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Storr, P., 1977, Town and Country Planning in Cyprus 1955-75, MPhil, University of Sheffield

Sutton, J. H., Early Fleetwater (1835-1847): A Study on the Genesis and Early Development of the new Town, Port and Holiday Resort of Fleetwood-on-Wyre, Lancashire, Department of History, University of Lancaster

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Talbot, R. J., 1984, The analysis of the modern residential landscape: a comparative study of 52 settlements in Northern England and Southern Scotland, PhD, School of Geography, University of Birmingham

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Tolpits, G., 1978, The evolution of speculative housing in Western Central London from 1630-1850 with special reference to Tgaburn, PhD, Department of Planning and Landscape, University of Manchester

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Turok, I., 1987, Local economic development in post-war Britain: processes, policies and their evaluation, PhD, Economics, Faculty of Urban and Regional Studies, University of Reading

Turner, I. D., 1979, Road planning: a critical analysis of public involvement, PhD, Geography, University of Reading

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Walter, J. K., 1974, The social development of Blackpool, 1890-1910, PhD, Department of History, University of Lancaster

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Wasserman, J., 1990, Early mining and railway housing in South Africa, PhD, University of Cambridge

Whittle, M., 1990, Philosophy in Preston: the changing face of charity in a Nineteenth-century Provincial Town, PhD, Department of History, University of Lancaster


Robert Freestone, University of New South Wales, Australia and Gordon Cherry, University of Birmingham, UK

The Fifth National Conference of the Society for American City and Regional Planning History (SACRPH) was held in Chicago, Illinois from 18-21 November 1993. The event was co-sponsored by the Urban History Association, the Public Works Historical Society, the College of Architecture, Art and Planning and the Chicago Historical Society. Most sessions were held at the Historical Society's revamped headquarters building south of Lincoln Park. Also in continuous use was the meeting room at The Cridge, the official conference hotel, a bracing three block walk away in the windy city's late fall weather.

The conference attracted a record registration, with some 200 delegates from all over the United States and sufficient international representation to form a quorum for the first executive committee meeting of the International Planning History Society. Fifty sessions were organised, covering a panoply of subjects including transportation, property development, historic preservation, housing, rural planning, planned communities, case studies of planning in particular cities, biographical studies, and the historical origins of planning. A welcome contemporary flavour - dealing with issues such as urban redevelopment, the design of retail malls, and the work of James Rouse - surfaced in many sessions, but the World's Columbian Exposition, the 1909 Plan for Chicago, the city beautiful movement, and so, unavoidably, Daniel Burnham, suitably pervaded the proceedings.
Seizing the Moment -
London Planning
1944-1994, London,
7th-9th April 1994

Stephen V Ward
Oxford Brookes University, UK

This was the first conference organized by the International Planning History Society and I must start by recording that it was a resounding success. Conceived modestly as a small UK seminar, its organizers worrying about the minutiae of financial break-even points, it grew into a medium-sized international conference. Roughly 60 delegates registered for the whole conference, though numbers for some individual events were well in excess of this. Jointly sponsored by IIFHS and the Vision for London organization, it was conceived to celebrate and review the half century of London planning since the Abercrombie Greater London Plan of 1944. The conference title was an adapted quotation from the plan, yet somehow managed to catch some of the rising tide of contemporary interest in shaping the UK capital’s destiny for the late 1990s and beyond.

The events started with a reception hosted by Visions for London at the Museum of London, followed by showings of two planning films of the early post-war years, introduced by John Gold and Stephen V. Ward (Oxford Brookes University). Proud City (1946) told the story of the Abercrombie and Forshaw County of London Plan of 1943. Notable particularly for the shots of a monocled Abercrombie, looking (if not quite sounding) rather like a figure from a P. G. Wodehouse novel, this rare film was very typical of the rather bossy, instructional style of the period. The second film, Home of Your Own (1951) had been made to promote Hemel Hempstead New Town at the time of the Festival of Britain. Cinematically it marked a sharp contrast with the earlier film because of its attempt to find a strong “human interest”, one that relied on housing rather than the more remote notion of planning.

The conference started in earnest the following morning at the University of East London. The first contribution was an absorbing keynote address by John Reps (Cornell University) who re-examined his own experiences of planning the London New Towns in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

Three things were particularly striking. The first was how much access to interview very senior decision makers he had been able to secure, a sharp contrast (we may suspect) to anyone attempting a similar exercise with the Urban Development Corporations today. The second was how meticulous he had been in recording each full details of these meetings. Finally there were his extensive colour slide photographs of the New Towns at this early period. Quite apart from anything else, I doubt that any British person at that time of austerity and rationing would have been able to lay their hands on quite so much Kodachrome! But we had cause to be grateful that this “Yankee at the Court of Clement Attlee” had been able to do so.

Thereafter the sessions were split, so that it is possible to give only a flavour of what went on. Andrew Saint (English Heritage) gave a vivid pre-history of the South Bank from 1910 to the Festival of Britain, showing particularly how bridge projects had the effect of blighting areas for long periods. Meanwhile Nicholas Bulllock (Kings College, University of Cambridge) challenged traditional conceptions of the inadequacies of the 1940s’ housing programme by arguing that it was necessary to consider the repair of bomb damaged housing and new construction together. When this was done the real achievement was truly remarkable.

Hermione Hobhouse (Survey of London) gave a review of the work of the London Society and other voluntary organizations in the town planning of London before 1945. She showed how the Society had played a key role in establishing the idea of ‘listing’ buildings of historic architectural interest, something which gained statutory endorsement under the 1947 Act. The theme of voluntarist endeavour was taken up by Tony Sutcliffe (University of Leicester) (with E. Marra) who examined the three independent plans for London during the Second World War - the MARS plan, the Royal Academy Plan and the London Regional Reconstruction Committee.

In another place, Pat Garside (University ofSalford) was simultaneously talking about the neglected relationship between post-war physical reconstruction and economic revival, focusing on the identification of comprehensive redevelopment areas in the East End. She was followed on the particular significance of the East End by Eva-Marie Neumann (London), who spoke about the role of the famous Lansbury Neighbourhood as a laboratory for “scientific” planning. Lansbury was a Live Architecture exhibit at the Festival of Britain and embodied the full panoply of 1940s planning effects, including the neighbourhood unit and mixed development. Meteorological issues also featured in the paper by Michael Matter, Michael Theis and Peter Newman (University of Westminster) who used the Max Lock Archive at their institution to...
show how Lock's Civic Diagnosis techniques, applied to Hull, Hartlepool and especially Middlesbrough in the 1940s were also used in the South Shoreditch study prepared in the early 1970s as a spin-off from the Greater London Development Plan.

Some of the themes raised by Cantride and Neumann were also present in Jim Velling (Birkbeck College, University of London)’s paper on housing and planning in post-war redevelopment. He showed how pre-1939 experience was important in preparing the ground for the massive planned redevelopments of the slum areas in the post-war years. But he also explored the important relationship between redevelopment and the urban property market and the equivalent institutionalization of this within the LCC, between Architect’s and Valuer’s Departments.

After lunch one track focused particularly on architectural and visual aspects of planning post-war London. Robert Thomas (Alan Baxter Associates) showed how the Holford-Holden plan for the City of London, presented in 1947, was dominated by the creation of improved conditions for office employment. This laid the basis for the near complete decline of the other traditional functions of the City - industry, wholesaling, trading - and the emergence of the City as an office stronghold by the 1960s. It was, moreover, dominated by a particular type of office building whose architecture reflected the daylighting considerations that had so concerned Holford and Holden. More explicitly architectural in its concerns was the paper by Tim Catchpole (Hatrow Fox) which followed up some of the same themes about daylighting though across central London as a whole. Its focus was on the rise of the office tower and he showed how the plans of the 1940s laid the basis for this, along with the amendment of the London Building Acts in 1954. Between these two papers, Victor Belcher (London) had reviewed the progress of the preservationist strand of planning in post-war London, following up the earlier paper by Hermione Hobbouse. He showed how the intense development pressures of these years presented a huge challenge to the widening conservation lobby.

Meanwhile the other session focused on particular areas of London. Emmanuel Marmaras (Athens) spoke about comprehensive development planning in south London, with particular reference to the South Bank and the Elephant and Castle. Keith Thomas (Oxford Brookes University) evaluated the success of the Abercrombie Plan in achieving its objectives for limited growth in industrial expansion. Focusing on the North West Kent area, he showed that by 1961, when the South East Study was superseding the 1944 Plan, substantial growth in industrial employment had in fact taken place. Finally Robert Home (University of East London) spoke about the history of Stratford Shopping Centre. This is one of the ‘landmarks’ that greeted us as we emerged from the Underground station at Stratford, on route to the conference venue, through an urban landscape almost totally devoid of visual interest. The brainchild of Tom North, the former Borough Architect and Planning Officer of West Ham, its history was not a happy one, though the effects of City Challenge funding, won in 1993, pointed to some improvement.

The next session took the form of a round table discussion, chaired by Gordon Cherry (University of Birmingham) and involving Walter Bor and William Tutton-Brown reflecting on the experience of reconstruction planning in the early post-war years. A good deal of their discussion focused on the failure to foresee many of the broader social and economic changes of the post-war years. There was also consideration of the tensions between the planners and other departments. There was a suggestion from Walter Bor that the planners were perhaps too much in awe of the valuers, and were too ready to accept the valuers’ assessment of the impossibility of challenging developers over the infamous third schedule permitted development loophole in the 1947 Act. This was followed by a second keynote address from Peter Self (Australian National University). Speaking about the Evolution of the Greater London Plan 1940-1970, Self asserted that the Abercrombie plan was the most successful regional plan ever produced. (In case this may be thought faint praise, we ought to add that he was also more positive than that). In a rather truncated presentation, he traced through the history of the Greater London Plan and its successor documents in the 1960s and early 1970s, showing how its green belt and countryside protection elements survived even the Thatcher governments.

Finally, on this very full day, we returned to film. Toby Haggith (Empirical War Museum) showed a very rare and little known film called Neighbourhood 15 (1948). This was a film made about the replanning of Canning Town then in the County Borough of West Ham, outside the LCC area. The area had featured in Abercrombie’s plan, thanks largely to the eager co-operation of Tom North, the Borough Architect, who had already been introduced in Rob Home’s paper about Stratford. The film was extremely interesting. Perhaps because it was locally made, it managed to be informative without being overly instructional. Tom North himself was shown at work. There was also wonderful footage of the quality of life in early post-war Canning Town, a heavily blighted area. Particularly memorable were the scenes of the school by the docks in Silvertown, where the children had superb views from their rooftop playground of the big ships then crowded in the Royal Docks complex, now of course completely deserted. The building of the low density Keir Hardie estate was shown, a far cry from the tower blocks, including the notorious Ronan Point, which followed in the 1960s.

Saturday began with an international programme. Karl Fischer (Gottingen) and Dirk Schubert (Technical University of Hamburg-Harburg) dealt with the impacts of the plans for London on German city planning during the 1940s. They showed how there were important similarities in planning approaches and revealed how much of London’s wartime planning was well known to German planners. Evidently the Swedish embassy acted as a courier, with the Abercrombie plans sent out from London in diplomatic bags. There was a contrast here with Italy, where the important links evidently came after the war, as revealed by Giorgio Postinato (Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia). British and especially London planning was an important formative influence on a new wave of anti-fascist planning intellectuals. The model finally lost its potency as it was increasingly questioned and discredited during the 1970s.

Alan Mabin (University of the Witwatersrand) explored the role of London planning as an influence on South African planning in two periods, the 1940s
and the 1990s. The pattern here was rather different to Germany or Italy, because larger City Commissioners. The largest was the 1312 acre Stepney Poplar CDA.

Much more contemporary was the paper by John Delafosse (University of Reading) who recalled his own personal involvement in the setting up of the London Planning Commission after the abolition of the GLC in 1985-6. In fact the proposal founded a much weaker London Planning Advisory Committee, which was created instead, though Delafosse argued that it has performed well despite the great limitations of its structure, functions and resources.

As with all the best conferences, the organizers had saved the best until the last until the last session. A round table on the Greater London Development Plan of the early 1970s gave the opportunity for three participants in the process - Ray Pahl, Philip Daniel and Robin Clements - to reflect. The GLDP was, in effect, the first of the structure plans and its history was a microcosm (though perhaps macrocosm would be more appropriate) of the dilemmas of the planning process in the early 1970s. There were 28,000 objections, an incredible number compared to previous experiences and symptomatic of a much less compliant public than Abercrombie ever had to deal with. A growing awareness of widening social and increasing economic problems tempted the GLC planners into ever more ambitious policy aspirations, many of which were clearly beyond the competence of the planning system to deliver. The palpable decline of the London economy over the period between 1969 when the plan was submitted and 1976 when it was approved brought further pessimism about the political complexion of central government changed twice over this same period and there were even more ministerial changes.

Overall the roundtable seemed to take the form of an inquest on the strange death of comprehensive planning, though bearing the evidence one wondered that it was alive in the first place, given the weight of the contradictory pressures it was called upon to bear. The session ended with some cogent reflections on the importance of maintaining a sense of planning continuity and work of the London Docklands Development Corporation. He also offered his thoughts as to how this political will needed to be communicated in a way that would be more likely to be given an opportunity to recreate London's planning completely anew. The Abercrombie tradition has lived on, especially in the green belt which was not to be published in the political culture of the south east (and East Anglia). In that sense at least the future might turn out to be very much like the past.

Overall, despite the omissions and the uncertainties over the present state of London's planning, this was a very fine conference. IPCC's Meetings Secretary, Robert Home, led from the front and played a central role in ensuring that the programme devised largely by Michael Hebbert, came to fruition. They, and the Vision for London organisation, especially Esther Caplin, who played a more general facilitative role, deserve our congratulations and thanks for a splendid event. Next stop, Hong Kong!

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BELCHER, Victor, 59 Gore Road, London E9 7HN, UK.
BRUEGEMANN, Robert, Architecture and Art History Department, m/c 2101, University of Illinois at Chicago, 935 W. Harrison Street, Chicago, IL 60607, USA.
BULLOCK, Dr N. O. A., Kings College, Cambridge CB2 1ST, UK.

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Amongst many other things Hall commented on the absence of consideration of the more recent period, especially in the 1980s and particularly the establishment and work of the London Docklands Development Corporation. He also offered his thoughts as to how this political will needed to be communicated in a way that would be more likely to be given an opportunity to recreate London's planning completely anew. The Abercrombie tradition has lived on, especially in the green belt which was not to be published in the political culture of the south east (and East Anglia). In that sense at least the future might turn out to be very much like the past.

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Publications

Abstracts


The 24 papers that comprise this volume - 8 in French and the remainder in English - focus on the nature and role of capital cities around the world, past, present and future. Representing a broad spectrum of international scholarship, they explore such topics as the changing roles of capitals, governing federal capitals, the dispute over Germany's political centre, the concept of New York as a world city, ancient and new capitals in Latin America, and future directions for European capital cities.

Dora P. Crouch, Water Management in Ancient Greek Cities, New York, Oxford University Press, 1993, 380 pp., £60.00, ISBN 0 19 507284 0.

Drawing on classical archaeology, the theory and history of urbanisation, geology and hydraulic engineering, this pioneering study shows how the supply, distribution and drainage of water contributed to the urbanisation of ancient cities in the Mediterranean part of Greece. From individual studies of such sites as Syracuse, Pergamon, Athens, Samos, Delphi and Corinth, the author concludes that increased knowledge and skill in management of water contributed directly to the urban development of the ancient Greek world.


The book explores the differing planning priorities for downtown Omaha from post World War II to the early 1970s. It links the changing planning orientation characteristic of this period to a changing vision of the city. Furthermore, the author argues that planning was a reactive response to a vision of what the city should be rather than an anticipatory foray into the future. The book also attempts to identify reasons for the changing image of the city and provides a good discussion of the various groups involved in implementing the planning ideals.


This collection of twelve essays traces the development of Phoenix from its beginning as an agricultural settlement in the 1860s up through its emergence as one of the nation's fastest-growing cities. Readers of Planning History will be especially interested in the chapters dealing with economic development, water policies and transportation. The volume is a good example of the multi-perspective approach to urban biography.


Chicago's North Michigan Avenue provides a solidly researched volume examining the forces that created the 'Miracle Mile'. The author goes well beyond the traditional focus of architectural historians and examines how property ownership, financing, zoning laws, design theory, advertising and building management, as well as specific architects, helped shape the avenue. Extensive photographs, dozens of maps drawn by the author, and a nice page design strengthens this volume's appeal.
Notes for Contributors

The prime aim of Planning History is to increase awareness of developments and ideas in planning history in all parts of the world. In pursuit of this aim, contributions (in English) are invited from members or non-members alike for any section of Planning History. Non-native English speakers, please do not worry if your English is not perfect. The editor will be happy to help improve its readability and comprehension, but cannot unfortunately undertake translations.

The text for PH is prepared using Wordperfect 5.1 and Pagemaker. Contributions on disk compatible with either of these systems are encouraged, with accompanying hard copy.

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These should aim to be in the range 2,000-3,000 words. They may be on any topic within the general remit of IPHS and may well reflect work in progress. Illustrations are normally expected for articles. They should be supplied as good quality xeroxes or black and white photographs where there are half tones. Articles should normally be referenced with superscript numbers in the text and a full reference list at the end, as shown in this issue. Authors should note that subheads are inserted in articles and give thought to what these might be and where they might be placed.

Other Contributions

Other types of contributions are also very welcome. Research reports should be not more than 2,000 words. They need not be referenced, but any relevant publications should be listed at the end. Illustrations are encouraged, following the above notes. Similar short pieces on important source materials, aspects of planning history practice (eg in conservation) etc. are also encouraged. Abstracts of relevant publications originally published in a language other than English are especially welcome. They should follow the format in this issue.

Notices of Current Events

These are very welcome from any part of the world. Organisers of events should, however, bear in mind that PH is only published three times a year, normally in April, August and December. Copy needs to be in at least 4 weeks before the start of the publication date to be certain of inclusion. Please try to ensure that calls for papers etc are notified sufficiently in advance for inclusion. Later inserts are possible, at the time of dispatch, though sufficient copies, folded as required, must be supplied by the event organiser. Nothing larger than a single A4 sheet will be accepted. Every effort will be made to include such inserted news material without cost. However, the Editor reserves the right to charge for such material at normal advertising rates.

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Members of IPHS elect a governing council every two years. In turn the council elects an executive Board of Management, complemented by representatives of SACRPH and UHA. The President chairs the Board and Council.

**President**

Professor Gordon E. Cherry  
School of Geography  
University of Birmingham  
Edgbaston,  
Birmingham B15 2TT, UK.  
Phone: 021 414 5538  

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