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A combined volume

These first two combined issues of 2004 contain three articles on British planning. The first two of these, by Marco Amati and Makoto Yokohari, and by Philip Jones, open up some new and interesting aspects of town planning in Britain between the wars and during the postwar period. The legacy of the greenbelt and of highrise building is still, of course, strongly in evidence in contemporary Britain. The third article, by Naoki Motoouchi and Nick Tiratsoo, assesses one of many important contributions of Max Lock, the British planner who died in 1988, aged 81. Lock was an influential figure, who worked in many countries. The next issue of Planning History will contain information on the Max Lock Centre and its contents. This is based at the University of Westminster, in London, and it is an under-used goldmine for planning historians of many different countries.

Call for articles

With the exception of the article on the Rio Exhibition and its wider significance, then, this current publication is almost completely concerned with Britain. Although recent issues have carried articles and other items on aspects of the history of urban planning in different countries, the United Kingdom continues to receive a disproportionate number of entries. Although this is good news if one is a planning historian of Britain, the Planning History bulletin, and the IPHS generally, would like to see more submissions from Africa, Asia, the Americas and Europe, especially Eastern Europe. If you feel you have an article of relevance to Planning History, please contact the editor at the address on the inside cover. Similarly, if you are supervising research students on any aspect of planning history, you may wish to tell them that the bulletin is refereed, and offers an opportunity for publication on aspects of their research. Details of how to submit articles or shorter work-in-progress papers are contained on the inside cover.

There is, however, absolutely no shortage of copy for Planning History; as both this issue and those of the previous year illustrate, interest in and publications in the history of planning and in town planners is if anything growing. Nonetheless, more diversity would be very welcome.

IPHS conferences

By the time you read this, the IPHS conference at Barcelona will be over. The 11th IPHS conference was set in one of the world’s most exciting cities. A full conference report will follow in Volume 26 Number 3. The next conference is scheduled to take place slightly later than usual, as opposed to the bi-annual pattern, in December 2006. It will be held in New Delhi, India, another exciting and fascinating venue. Subsequent issues of Planning History will also contain news and registration details of the forthcoming conference.

Mark Clapson
University of Westminster, UK.

Research Fellowship to revisit and revitalise Garden City model

Advocates of Garden City planning concepts across the globe are cordially invited to put their ideas forward for a new ground-breaking Research Fellowship.

The Fellowship, to be awarded later this year, leading to a three-month commission in 2005, looks to encourage new and innovative expressions of the Garden City concept, conceived and developed by Ebenezer Howard, Barry Parker and Raymond Unwin. The research should demonstrate how Garden City principles can be applicable globally as part of the response to 21st Century housing needs.

Based in London, the Fellowship attracts an award of £5,000 together with an honorary unsalaried position at the University of Westminster for the duration of the Fellowship. The required output will be a 7,500-word paper, in English, which will be published, potentially in a leading academic or professional journal.

Applications for the Fellowship are welcomed from academics who have completed a PhD in a relevant discipline and professionals, with at least five years experience as planners, architects or landscape architects, and currently working for a professional practice or consultancy.

Those interested in applying for the Fellowship are required to submit their application in no more than 2,000 words by 31 October 2004. Applicants should outline their particular field of interest and inquiry and will need to demonstrate a clear relevance to the Garden City tradition and its future progress as a planning tool.

The Fellowship, the world’s first on Garden City revitalisation, is a joint venture of the University of Westminster and Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation, the charitable organisation which today owns and manages the first Garden City Estate in Hertfordshire, England.

“This is an exciting opportunity for someone out there to present the case for Garden Cities in the 21st Century,” notes Dr Maurits van Rooijen, Vice President (International Strategy and Development) at the University of Westminster, as well as researcher of ‘green town planning issues’ and Convener of the last International Planning History Society Conference ‘Cities of Tomorrow’. “Embracing the considerable body of knowledge which already exists on Garden Cities, the Fellowship is a timely reminder of the fact that the concepts, on which they were built, can help make a better world,” he added.

Stuart Kenny, Director General of Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation commented, “I firmly believe that the Garden City concept is as relevant today as it was 100 years ago. Worldwide, there is huge demand for sustainable new communities and, adapted to reflect individual national considerations, the Garden City model has much to contribute.”

For more information on the Fellowship, and a FREE copy of the ‘Cities of Tomorrow’ CD Rom, visit www.lgcmf.com/fellowship. The closing date for applications is 31 October 2004.

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Letchworth Garden
Heritage Foundation
The actions of landowners, government and planners in establishing the London green belt of the 1930s

MARCO AMATTI AND MAKOTO YOKOHARI
University of Tsukuba, School of Planning Policy and Science
Tennodai 1-1-1, Tsukuba Shi, 305-8573 Japan

Introduction
The green belt purchases of the mid-1930s have rarely been researched. An investigation into how the green belt was implemented at this time, may help understanding of why the separation of town and country remains a feature of UK planning today. The aim of this study is to look at the resistance to the implementation of the green belt and the methods used to overcome this between 1920 and 1938. First, the historical and legislative context of the 1920s and 1930s is detailed. Then, the lead-up to the London County Council’s 1935 green belt scheme is investigated. Finally, we employ a case study of the purchase of green belt land, made with such a loan, and draw the following conclusions. The results show the important role of civil servants and landowners in allowing the green belt purchases to proceed. The significance of the various methods that are used to allow the green belt to be implemented are discussed in relation to past studies and current debates.

A central tenet of post-War UK planning, has been the separation of town and country. The success of this policy through the use of green belts in the UK, resulted in the same concept being borrowed and replicated in other countries, with varying levels of success. For example, Japan planned a green belt in 1939. During the 1950s and early 1960s, under enormous growth pressure and through a combination of objections from landowners and a lack of administrative support, the green belt was abandoned. Similarly, in Korea green belts have been used to contain urban areas since the policy was imposed by fiat in 1971. Currently this policy is being reviewed, as a result of pressure from landowners.

The 1947 Town and Country Planning Act, which settled the issue of compensation to landowners and nationalised development rights, also first enabled green belts to be fully implemented in the UK. Prior to this, an attempt was made to introduce a green belt around London in 1935. A number of planning history studies mention this period, but none look further into it.

The green belt purchases of the 1930s provide an interesting case study because of the conditions at the time. The pre-War period was characterised by high urban growth, fragmentation of landownership and loose planning control. In addition, the green belt concept had not permeated local and central government to the extent that it was accepted without being questioned. Investigating this period, and researching the arguments and methods used in implementing the green belt, can deepen our understanding of why the town-country separation has remained a feature of the UK’s planning system, compared to other countries. In addition, though the history of the green belt would appear to be dominated by planning pioneers, studies by Sheal and Booth have shown the importance of considering the efforts of local and central government civil servants. Such an understanding may contribute to the debate on the future of the green belt, as government and planners cater to the requirements of sustainability, and vacillate between the South-East’s housing pressure and the demands of powerful pressure groups such as the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE).

The present study looks at the years 1920 to 1938 and investigates the lead-up to and the implementation of the London green belt. At both stages, the aim is to show the resistance that the green belt’s implementation encountered and how this resistance was overcome.

Methods and data sources
First, as background, and using secondary sources, we explain the relevant historical context of the 1920s and 1930s. Then, at the central government level, we look at the attempts to propose and fund the green belt scheme. Finally, we employ a local level case study of a green belt purchase. From the results, which show how resistance to the green belt was overcome, we aim to propose some reasons for why the green belt has survived. (Figure 1)

Background: Historical Context 1920-1938
The following points, regarding landownership and changes in society, are relevant to the study. Because of a decline in agriculture from 1880, rising tax and death duties, and the death of heirs after the First World War, large farming estates continued to be sold and broken up during the 1920s and 30s. This increased the fragmentation of land ownership. In 1934 owners occupied 10% of all agricultural land in England and Wales. In 1927 this figure had risen to 37%. Also, a rising standard of living, a shorter working week and improved transport, resulted in new pressures on the countryside, during the 1920s and 30s. For example, the area under urban land use in England and Wales increased from 6% to 8% between 1931 and 1939 and a rate not seen before then or since. Pressure also came from the middle and working classes to access the countryside for holidays, rambling and other leisure pursuits. To summarise, as a 1926 report for the mid-Suffolk JTPC explains, this was a time when the ‘natural resistants imposed by distance and the difficulty of obtaining land are now largely swept away’.

Towards the 1935 London County Council Scheme:

Overview
To counter the lack of control in planning, throughout the early 1930s, counties around London had been active in buying land for preservation. The Ministry of Health over five years, had given loans to allow councils to buy 1,465 ha of land (Table 1). In 1935, the London County Council (LCC) accelerated this process by establishing a separate loans scheme to buy land for conservation in the green belt. In the space of 14 months, agreements had been reached to buy 4,650 ha of land – a significant contribution (19%) towards implementing Linwood’s green grid scheme.

During the inter-war period the Ministry of Health was responsible for planning. The Ministry and local and county councils were able to give loans to purchase of open space. A large number of groups were engaged in determining the aim of the green belt. Among these, were Joint Planning Committees (JTPCs). These were described as having a ‘purely advisory’ function, taking a broader view of town planning. These JTPCs benefited planning by allowing the different local authorities to reach agreements and to exchange ideas on a wide range of issues. By joining these JTPCs, local district councils could participate in determining the aim of the green belt and other regional open space schemes. By 1925, 16 JTPCs had been established in the whole of the UK, of which were in the London area. Three years later, there were eight such committees around London alone. The largest and most influential of the JTPCs at the time was the Greater London Regional Planning Committee (GLRCP). This was established in 1927 and was composed of 138 local authorities, controlling an area of 2925 km². In addition to these, some influential amenity societies such as the Council for the Preservation of Rural England and the London Society were able to formulate the aim of the green belt.

Finally, the actual purchase of green belt land was made by County Councils, local district councils and some amenity organizations such as the National Playing Fields Association (NFPFA) (Table 2).

Resistance to the green belt
In 1926, Neville Chamberlain, the then Minister of Health, noted to a deputation that the idea that urban growth was a problem, was not a universally shared feeling. In the same year, the Ministry of Health had undertaken a feasibility study of the cost and the...
Overcoming resistance: arguing for the green belt’s necessity

The first green belt purchases were made as part of the founding of Letchworth Garden City in 1909, where 500 ha of agricultural land were purchased as a buffer between Hitchin and Baldock. Howard’s green belt was meant to have an agricultural function to supply produce for the town. This aim was later repeated in the London Society’s plan for London, which also assumed that the green belt could be paid for through agricultural rents.

In 1927, the GLRPC began to question the purely agricultural function of the green belt. A more flexible use was proposed, i.e. the use of land for playing fields as well as for institutions such as mental hospitals. Nor was the green belt meant to be continuous. In some places, development could be permitted, such as that required for arterial roads.

To argue for the necessity of having a green belt and to find a way of paying for it, the GLRPC changed the green belt’s aim four times in ten years. By changing its aim to playing fields, London’s residents – those most in need of open space – or the National Playing Fields Association could be asked to pay for green belt purchases. The 1927 GLRPC report above, stated that there was probably ‘room for obtaining a large revenue from the provision of private open spaces for playing fields...’ In 1929, London was showing a ‘willingness to contribute to a substantial extent to the cost of land for open spaces outside its own area’.

However, the aim of the green belt changed in 1934. When lobbying the Treasury its implementation became a ‘national concern’. Following this, the GLRPC suggested that the green belt might be useful to Air and Army Ministries in time of war. Accordingly, the aim of the green belt switched to providing space for aerodromes and barracks. In all cases, the appeals for funding were sympathetically received but unsuccessful.

Though a 1926 London County Council (LCC) study on playing fields had shown the need for open space in the city, and a speech by Chamberlain in the same year, had noted that playing fields were the best land for building, and were disappearing fastest, there was difficulty in justifying that it had to be in the form of a belt around London. The Treasury’s, logic response to a request for green belt funding, highlighted this. Not only could they not give sole priority to London, but felt that ‘What is important, [compared to providing a belt] is that large areas of open land should be reserved within a reasonable distance of the thickly inhabited parts of Greater London.’ The Air and Army Ministries on the other hand had powers to acquire land in the event of a national emergency.

Estimating the green belt’s cost

In 1927 the Ministry of Health had tried to produce an estimate of the positive effect of open space reservation on neighbouring land and house prices. No firm conclusions could be drawn from this study. Despite this, the assumed effect of open space on the value of neighbouring house-prices was important in subsequent discussions.

For example, in a report for the GLRPC in the same year, Unwin discussed legally ‘sterilising’ the land which involved entering into a compensation agreement to buy the future developed value of the land. He noted that it might be possible to discount the benefits of preserving the land, from this cost. As he explained, this appeared to suggest a redistribution of rights over land. In a situation where many landowners exist, a landowner adjoining the reserved land would benefit, whereas the landowner with reserved land would suffer. In a situation where there is one landowner, the benefits of sterilisation benefits are calculated themselves out. "Is it possible for the same results to be achieved, and if so, by what measures, where the land is in a number of ownerships, in order that the community may not suffer from this adventuraneous fact?" he asked.

Though Unwin incorporated the idea of pooling the benefit from preserving the land, the pre-1947 problem of interfering with land rights, remained.

In addition, the arguments of the GLRPC were not helped by the difficulties of accurately estimating the cost of the green belt. For example, in 1929, Unwin estimated that the cost of reserving an area of land of 154 square miles (246 sq. Kms) would amount to around £2 million. A month later however, Unwin revised this estimate arguing that it was impossible to calculate the exact cost of the green belt, because so many factors affected the land price.

Implementation of the 1935 London County Council’s Scheme: overview

Despite the arguments and the attempts to estimate the green belt’s cost, its implementation eluded the GLRPC which broke up at the end of 1936. Herbert Morrison, the Chairman of the LCC from 1924, believed in the benefits of depopulation into satellite towns and the role of the green belt for this purpose. Thus the LCC was able to take the initiative and in early 1935, proposed the loans scheme for purchasing green belt land. The conditions of this scheme were as follows:

Loans were available for up to 50% of the cost of purchase or legally ‘sterilising’ the land. In total, £2 million was available over three years. Interestingly, the LCC’s loans scheme contains no specification of the green belt’s aim. When clarification was requested in late 1935 from one of the County Councils, the LCC explained the aim in the broadest terms: if playing fields were bought, they must not be reserved for the use of local players only, otherwise the land should be designated for people to ‘roam about in’.

Resistance to the green belt

The LCC’s scheme was widely taken up, but nonetheless encountered some opposition. This came from local authorities, in particular certain key figures who tried to block the green belt purchases. For example, in Eton Rural District Council, (1935) a Chairman of the Council saw no benefit from the conservation of land apart from a loss of rates. In 1936, the Clerk of Kent County Council was said to be ‘particularly obstructive’. This provoked the suggestion, eventually decided against, that the Minister ‘as a Kentish man’ should intervene.

There was a difference in the opinion of these local authorities and central government on the function of open space, which can be considered as a possible reason for such opposition. In a 1935 letter from an official at the Ministry of Health to J. A. N. Barlow at the Treasury, the local authorities, were said to be doing ‘tolerably well in providing sufficient space for public health necessities (i.e. recreation grounds and playing fields) but when it comes to large areas of country which are wanted more for their ‘amenity’ value than for actual use, the authorities are more difficult about the expense involved. Yet from the point of view of planning, this is of first importance’. Separating issues was important to central government. Local authorities were simply concerned about the function of open spaces.

The preservation of open space also aroused some opposition from landowners. There were some direct complaints to the Joint Town Planning Committee in Mid-Surrey for example, from a landowner who wished to extract minerals from his land. However, such complaints were described as not being representative. In Buckinghamshire, negotiation had to be extensively used to convince landowners to reserve the land as open space.

Therefore, two types of resistance can be seen to the
green belt's implementation under the LCC's scheme: that of local authorities opposing central government intervention and that of landowners who wished to make a profit from their land. To look closer at the way in which this resistance was dealt with, we employ a case study of one of the green belt land purchases.

**Overcoming resistance: a case study of Ockham Common, Surrey**

**Background to the site**
In 1930 Surrey was the richest county in the UK and in the process of undergoing profound changes as a result of urbanisation. For example, the population rose from 845,578 people in 1911 to 1,180,878 in 1931 as a result of the construction of a new railway line and a growth in the number of commuters. Surrey was also a convenient destination for London-based holiday-makers and day-trippers.

Ockham Common was private land with a combination of a location on a major road out of London (the London-Portsmouth road, currently the A3), a frontage of 1.2 km on either side of the road, and a dry soil of non-agricultural land-use, making it ideal for development in an area undergoing intense development pressure. This green belt purchase was chosen for this study to expose the roles played by the local authority, landowners and central government. The area comprised 356 acres (141 ha) of mixed woodland and gorse lying 30 kmiles from the centre of London (Figure 4).

In 1931 Surrey had passed the Surrey Local Act in response to urban growth pressures. Sections 70 and 71 allowed the Council to enter into agreements with landowners to allow the purchase of land for preservation. If an agreement could not be reached, then the Council was permitted to use a compulsory purchase order to force the landowner to sell the land. However, to allow this, a public inquiry had to be held. If the Minister of Health then granted authorization, the purchase was permitted to go ahead.

**Cost reduction through bargaining**
Because of the three-year limit on the LCC loans scheme, Surrey County Council was pressed to buy Ockham Common. However, in trying to purchase this and other land for the green belt, the council required a £100,000 additional loan from the Ministry of Health. Such loans could be granted, but this was only possible after a public inquiry.

Up to that time, Surrey County Council had used a method that they termed the "secret bargain" scheme which involved negotiating with the landowners to convince them to sell the land. Secrecy was necessary to ensure that the negotiation did not raise the price of other land.

If this method could not be used, i.e. where the landowner refused to sell the land, a compulsory purchase order would be employed under Sections 70 and 71 of the 1931 Surrey Act. Table 3 shows the offers made at the secret bargain on the cost of the land. Ranking all the areas bought using the Ministry's loan reveals a significant difference between Ockham Common and Nonsuch Park. Both were bought at the same time, but the latter site had been bought with a compulsory purchase order.

Such was the need for secrecy that the Deputy Clerk of Surrey Council went directly to the Ministry in December 1935 to ask for a block loan and to "dispense with the need for a public inquiry." Though a public inquiry was held in March 1936, the Ministry encouraged the Council to remain vague about the site they wished to purchase.

**The Role of the landowner**
In addition to the actions of Sussex County Council, Ockham Common's landowner and the neighbouring landowners played an important role. The owner of Ockham Common, Lady Lovelace, was offering the site for purchase at £24,000. It was widely thought to be a "gift" at such a price.

In four articles published in a local newspaper during a six-month period in 1935, landowners adjoining Ockham Common were encouraged to contribute to its purchase. One article sub-titled "An Appeal to Neighbours," noted that though contributions had been received, it hoped that "still further contributions towards the purchase price would be received."
20th Century, because this group was able to maintain sufficient power to impose its ideas on planning at the time. Though the link between aristocratic landownership and the history of planning is known its relationship to the green belt has not been clarified.

In particular, the neighbours' contribution to the purchase of green belt shown in this study, represents a concrete example of the transfer of an aristocratic role in preserving land, to a Not-in-my-backyard (NIMBY) role. The role of NIMBYs in preventing any changes to the green belt is not currently well understood and needs further research.

Notes


6. For example, the reason why urban areas cannot be is never elaborated. See, Rydin, Y. and Myerson, G. 1980, 'Explaining and interpreting ideological effects: a rhetorical approach to green belts', Environment and Planning D, Vol. 7, pp. 463-479.


12. PRO HLG 4/3764 Letter from Minister to participants of Thames valley regional conference, 1922.06.12.


14. PRO HLG 4/3507 Information distributed to participants of GLRPC, G. Pepler, 1926.05.


16. PRO HLG 4/3507 Minutes of deputation to Minister of Health, 1926.02.23.


20. PRO HLG 4/3241 Preliminary issues prior to the first meeting of the GLRPC, Unwin, 1927.09.20.

21. ibid.


23. PRO HLG 52/1217 Statement from G. H. Gatter Secretary of the Conference of Greater London Councils and Counties to the Exchequer, 1934.01.15.


26. ibid. Minutes of the deputation to the Treasury in providing for "green belt", 1934.03.30.

27. ibid. Minutes of a conference between GLRPC and Air Ministry, 1934.03.06.

28. PRO HLG 51/50 Dedication of land for open spaces or parks, effect on value of adjoining property, C.F. Harwell Thomas, 1927.01.27.

29. op cit. 20.


31. PRO HLG 4/3242 GLRPC Open space belt, preliminary estimate of the order of cost, R. Unwin, 1929.05.29.

32. PRO HLG 4/3243 Planning London, P. G. Saunders 1935.08.03.

33. PRO HLG 79/1074 LCC Joint report of the Parks Committee and the Town Planning Committee, 1934.12.14.


35. ibid. Memorandum, G. Pepler, 1936.03.30.


37. PRO HLG 52/1217 Letter from W. A. Robinson to J. A. N. Barlow, 1935.04.11.


41. PRO HLG 54/175 Surrey County Council Act, Sect. 70-71 1931.

42. PRO HLG 79/1074 Minute of meeting, W. A. Ross and Sussex CC, 1935.12.10.

43. ibid. Memo from W.A. Ross to Francis, 1936.01.11.


45. op cit. 43.

46. op cit. 42.

47. op cit. (30). Letter from Ross to Sussex CC, 1936.03.13.

48. ibid. Meeting WA. Ross and Sussex CC, 1935.11.29.

49. PRO HLG 79/1074 Surrey Advertiser, Ockham Land in Green Belt?, 1935.06.29.

50. op cit. 44.

51. op cit. 42.

52. op cit. 42.

53. ibid. Inspector's Report F. G. Hill, 1936.03.10.


56. In terms of the power of landowners over the planning system, the battle over 'Glyre Woods' provides a good example. The Duke of Newcastle had threatened to withdraw his gift of 'Glyre Woods' to Sussex Council if the route of the Docking By-pass was not reconsidered. See 'Times' article 1929.07.31 'Docking By-pass' PRO HLG 4/3353. The power of such large landowners over the planning system, remains a feature of the planning system today, see Adams, C. D. 1997, 'Opportunities for landowner participation in local planning', Planning Outlook, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp. 66-69.
The housing programme sponsored by the British state in the years following World War II wrought tremendous changes on the urban landscape of Britain. High-rise studies (five or more storeys) by simple virtue of its built form, remain perhaps the most visibly obvious manifestation of these dramatic changes. Between the 1950s and early 1970s, 6,500 tower blocks sprang up in cities across Britain, with the exception of Scotland and to a lesser extent London, previously had a relatively limited tradition of flatted housing types. Although it was individual local authorities that actually carried out these building programmes, they were undertaken within a funding framework controlled by central government in Westminster.

The Housing Subsidies Act, 1956 introduced a payment escalator based on the height of buildings erected. Though some local authorities were using this building type prior to 1956, the numbers of flats in high-rise blocks built annually increased sharply thereafter, from just over 8,000 in 1956 to a peak of over 40,000 in 1966. The Act was a critical enabling factor in this high-rise boom. Yet the reasons why the Ministry of Housing and Local Government produced this Act—one that had a fundamental effect on the shape of British cities—remain somewhat murky. Previous studies examining Britain's high-rise, particularly those by Dunleavy and Cooney, did not have access to Public Record Office files covering the period leading up to the 1956 Act. This paper seeks to build on these early studies and shed a little more light on the arcane process of policy formation within the Ministry during this period.

Origins of the Flats Subsidy

The flats subsidy was introduced as part of the Housing Act, 1955 which changed the additional subsidies available where local authorities were building on expensive land. Where flats of four or more storeys were being built to relieve overcrowding, the floor price triggering the additional subsidies was reduced from £3,000 to £1,500 per acre. This provision was retained in the Housing (Financial and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1946. Civil servants considering revisions to the subsidies in 1954 could find no record of why the £1,500 figure had been decided on, hypothesising that it was based on the cost of building flats in London, although the subsidy was applied nationally. Dunleavy argues that this early flats subsidy was designed with the hope that local authorities might be encouraged to redevelop their inner areas at a density sufficiently high to require the use of flats, with the assumption that most authorities would otherwise be unwilling to use this housing type.

The Housing Act, 1952 gave an overall increase in funding levels without making big changes to the overall subsidy structure. As a result, the expensive site subsidy, central government's main tool for encouraging inner city redevelopment, became a large drain on the Exchequer. The other problem was that the additional subsidy was paid on a per-flat basis, meaning that local authorities had an incentive to squeeze as many flats as possible onto an expensive site to maximise the subsidy paid. This 'site cramming' issue was of great concern to the garden city lobby, a group of people that that the Ministry's Accountant General EDward clearly felt were a factor in the 1953 proposals to the Exchequer.

In proposing in 1954 that a study group be set up to look at the question of the flats subsidies, Edwards counselled discretion, as...

...publicity at the outset would only excite the long-haired ones who want to reduce the densities in our cities and who would abate the flat subsidy to a derisory sum in order to ensure that everyone lives in a house with a garden.

In the government mindset of the period, providing housing for all in low-density settlements was simply incompatible with the fundamental desire to prevent further urban sprawl and minimise the use of greenfield sites.

Pioneers in the provinces

While the Ministry's belief that there was unwarrranted bias against flats in provincial cities was well founded in many cases, there were a number of pioneering authorities. Both Birmingham and Coventry were using high-rise by the start of the 1950s. Indeed, both authorities not only built tower blocks to replace slums in their central areas, but started using this building type on greenfield sites around the urban fringe. These midlands authorities had a particular problem as they had large slum clearance programmes, relatively limited stocks of urban land and, with the exception of a small development serving the steel mill at Corby, no new town to absorb surplus population displaced by redevelopment. Both cities thus felt it was imperative to stretch their remaining stocks of building land as far as possible, using high density building types in their outer suburbs.

Both authorities ran into the same problem, however, with the calculation of the additional flat subsidy under the Housing Act, 1952. Civil servants working in the Regional Office of the Ministry felt that as these greenfield sites cost significantly less than the £1,500 per acre threshold, the flat subsidy would not be granted on a project in the Tile Cross area of Birmingham. This caused panic in the two cities, as both had a number of suburban high-rise schemes already in train. If the additional subsidies were not granted, they would find themselves with a number of blocks where the unsubsidised rent levels would be so high as to exclude most low income slum dwellers. Both authorities lobbied the Ministry to reconsider, and Whitley-based civil servants, investigating the issue, took the view that the problem was a misunderstanding by the Midlands Regional Office. The Whitley view was that the £1,500 figure should be based on the development costs of the land, rather than the purchase price. As tower blocks required expensive foundations, Higginbotham of the housing division commented that 'I have yet to come across a case where blocks of flats have failed to qualify for the flats subsidy, on the ground that the cost of the site as developed was below £1,500.' Birmingham would later claim that having to put their flat building programme on hold during the confusion led to a loss in output amounting to 500 homes.

Revisions to the subsidy structure were, therefore, becoming an important issue, particularly given the difficulty the Ministry seemed to be having in operating the existing combination of expensive site and flat subsidies. The Ministry did not want to be seen as discouraging the use of tall blocks where high densities were required, particularly as more large and influential provincial authorities were beginning to use this site trigger in greater numbers. The irony of this was that the scheme that prompted the debate, Birmingham's Tile Cross, was built at the relatively low density of 57 rooms to the acre; thus defeating the object of paying out the extra subsidy to build flats. Indeed, this was one of the arguments used in favour of a subsidy based on density, rather than housing type.

The Design Question

In the early 1950s the Ministry clearly believed that provincial local authorities were still very much anti-flat. Responding to a letter from Frank Holland of the London County Council in February 1952, the Ministry's HR Riddle replied:

In many of the provincial cities especially there is unreasonable prejudice against flats so that they go on eating up the countryside with cottage estates while their decaying centres cry out for redevelopment at high density. If we pull down the starting part of the expensive site subsidy too far and pay them too much they will certainly redevelop their central areas—but entirely with cottages.

Uncase was growing, however, about the impact of the flat building subsidy structure as laid out in the 1952 Act. This is illustrated in the discussions that took place during 1953 about a new edition of the Housing Manual providing guidelines to local authorities with model designs and layouts. The preferred design template was clearly that of 'mixed development,' where tall blocks were combined with low-rise flats and houses, a model pioneered by the London County Council (LCC). This is perhaps unsurprising, given the successive appointments of JH Forsyth, AW Cleaver and WJ Whitley as the Ministry's Chief Architect—half LCC men.

At a meeting in November 1953 members of the housing division clearly expressed the view that any new subsidy structure would need to be compatible with the Ministry's design objectives. The existing subsidies, with their incentive to 'cram' sites with flats in four-storey blocks, were simply not compatible with the 'mixed development' ideal. A radical suggestion for reforming the subsidies to overcome this problem was suggested at the end of the year by D Nunn, the Chief Quantity Surveyor, based in the Ministry's architecture's division. His proposal was for a system based around density, rather than housing type, taking the form:

$$S = x + z$$

where

- $S$ is a basic or standard subsidy
- $x$ is a factor related to size of dwelling
- $y$ is a factor related to density
- $z$ is an additional subsidy related to the cost of site as developed in excess of £1,500 per acre.

The system was thus based around what Nunn described as a 'density multiplier' (factor 'y'). This, he felt, would allow local authorities to use a mix of
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housing types to achieve the desired density for a given site, but without relying on 'excessive' use of expensive building types such as high-rise. In a departmental meeting just before Christmas 1953 to discuss revising subsidies, some disquiet was expressed at Nunn's proposals. Mr. Beddoes, of the housing subsection, did, however, state that a change to the way subsidies were calculated might be used to camouflage 'a reduction in the general needs subsidy'.

This idea of merely tinkering with the subsidy structure to disguise a general reduction in public expenditure seems to have remained the guiding principle. This lack of seriousness about radically recasting the 'flat' subsidy can be seen in the failed attempt to set up a working party to review the whole question. Nunn's proposals were being discussed, generally negatively, in memos to the Permanent Secretary during the summer of 1954. The New Minister Duncan Sandys was unenthusiastic about dedicating too much time to the issue, recommending that the proposed working party be called a 'study group' and questioning whether there was any need for it at all. The group never really got anywhere: indeed it had still to meet in May 1955, held up by council tenants could afford to pay higher rents. Which subsidy? Finally, a...
General needs subsidies were reintroduced by the Conservatives in the Housing Act, 1961 and the whole system radically recast by the Housing Subsidies Act, 1967. That 1967 Act, though more generous to local authorities, removed the progressive height element, a key factor in the dramatic decline in high-rise building thereafter. In eleven years of operation, however, this device introduced in 1956 had subsidised the building of more than a quarter of a million flats in high-rise blocks. As such, the Housing Subsidies Act, 1956, can be argued as, albeit unintentionally, transforming the high-rise block from being a device for raising housing densities in certain circumstances, to becoming the icon of Britain’s modernist reconstruction. High-rise have since served as a cipher for the society that was wrong about that reconstruction, yet their creation in such numbers was an unintended outcome of the contested process of recasting the overall subsidy system.

Notes
5 Danleavy p16.
6 HLG 101/738 Memo, Edwards to Permanent Secretary [Evelyn Sharp] ‘Subsidies for Flats and Houses’ 29/6/54
7 Hall, Peter, Gracey, Harry; Dower, Roy, Thomas, Ray The Development of English Volume Two: the planning system George Allen & Unwin, London, 1973
12 Birmingham seeks special rents for flats’ Evening Dispatch 18/5/52
13 HLG 101/737, Note on file, Hickenbottom 23/10/53

“Mr. Field tells how the City lost 500 homes" Birmingham Gazette 6/11/54
16 HLG 101/737 Memo, Beddow to Wilkinson & Edwards ‘Houses and flats in areas of high density’ 21/5/54
17 HLG 101/737, Letter, Riddle to Frank Holland [LCC] ‘Cottages on Expensive Land’ 26/2/52
18 HLG 101/737 Minutes of meeting ‘Houses 1954’ 9/10/53
19 Finance p73
20 HLG 101/737 Minutes of meeting ‘Revision of housing subsidies’ 10/11/53
21 Nunn collaborated with Mr Lichfield on this proposal. This summary appears in HLG 101/737 memo Hickenbottom to Dunleavy 23/10/53
22 HLG 101/737 Nunn and Lichfield ‘Housing subsidies’ 9/12/53
23 HLG 101/737 Minutes of meeting ‘Revision of housing subsidies’ 18/12/53
24 HLG 101/739 Memo, Edwards to Permanent Secretary ‘Subsidies for flats and houses’ 29/6/54, Memo, Wilkinson to Permanent Secretary, ‘Subsidies for flats and houses’ 17/5/54.
25 HLG 101/739 Memo, Edwards to ¾, no date c. December 1954
26 HLG 101/734 Memo, Edwards to Wilson (Department of Health for Scotland, 28/5/55
28 Macmillan being the Minister at this time. Ravett, Alison Council Housing and the history of a social experiment. Routledge, London, 2001 pp79
29 HLG 101/737 Memorandum ‘Annual review of housing subsidies: subsidies in respect of houses completed after 30 June, 1954 (confidential draft)’ c. 5/54
30 Or over encouraging it if flat subsidies were not cut in line with those for houses. HLG 101/739 Anon. ‘The proposed reduction in housing subsidies: note for the Minister’s meeting with the Association of Local Authorities on June 21st at 4.45pm n.d. c. June 1954.
31 HLG 101/739 Minutes of meeting ‘Review of housing subsidies: Minister’s conference with the Local Authority Associations’ 22/5/54
32 HLG 101/739 Anon. ‘Subsidy rates: brief for the Parliamentary Secretary’ 11/7/54
34 HLG 101/713 Memo (Secret) Edwards to Minister [J. Sandys] ‘Borrowing by local authorities’ 20/5/54
35 HLG 101/748 Memo Phillips to Cos 30/1/56
36 HLG 101/748 Memo Phillips to Deputy Secretary, 15/6/56
37 In effect, halving the levels laid down in 1952. HLG 101/748 Extract from Cabinet Minutes, 18/10/56
39 HLG 101/713 Minutes of meeting (Secret) ‘Housing Subsidies Bill’ 27/5/56
40 HLG 101/714 Minutes of meeting ‘Housing Subsidies Bill’ 12/8/55
41 HLG 101/394 Memo Stuart to Phillips ‘Cost of flat building’ 9/1/55
42 HLG 101/354 Memo Sharp to Wrigley ‘Embortion flats’ 10/4/56
43 HLG 101/304 Memo Stuart to Phillips ‘Cost of flat building’ 9/11/55
44 HLG 101/748 Memo Beddow to Phillips 7/9/56
45 MHLG Housing Statistics HMSO, London, 1966-76

Introduction
In the spring of 1944, the young architect and planner Max Lock accepted a commission from the local council to re-plan Middlesbrough, an iron and steel town of 13,000 people in the North East of England. His intention, explained, was to work in a new way, planning with the inhabitants rather than for them, thus transforming what had previously been a largely top-down discipline into a ‘democratic process’. This paper examines how Lock functioned in Middlesbrough, and comments on various aspects of his final recommendations, before turning to discuss what impact he had on the subsequent development of British planning. Our conclusion is that though Lock’s insights and achievements were substantial, they were then for the most part ‘forgotten’ during the 1950s and 1960s, and in a brief coda, we speculate as to why this was so.

Max Lock and his ideas
Born in 1909 to middle-class parents, Max Lock studied and then taught at the Architectural Association in the 1920s and 1930s, meanwhile starting a private practice. He was a Quaker and had marked liberal sympathies, both in terms of architecture and politics. In the later 1930s, he joined the Modern Architecture Research Group (MARS), undertook a tour of Scandinavia to learn about new advances in housing policy, and became an independent councillor in his home-town of Warrington. When the Second World War broke out, Lock, as a conscientious objector, found life hard, but in the build-up as interest in reconstruction blossomed, he was employed by Leverhulme to undertake a survey of the badly bombed city of Hull. Always an energetic proselytiser, Lock now began promoting what he saw as no less than a wholly new method of planning.

Lock believed that planners had lost their way in the inter-war years. The humanistic tradition, associated with Geddes, Brantham and Mumford had been forgotten. Instead, vested interests had been allowed to dominate, and define the realm of possibilities in terms of their own narrow ends. As a result, planning had been reduced to merely the ‘cosmetic’, while sprawl and congestion had spread across the country unchecked. Yet, as Lock saw it, this phase was now, in turn, being superseded. The experience of the Blitz had radicalised people’s ideas and provided the physical space for a fresh start. In this context, the pioneers of urban design had once again become relevant. For the younger generation, the urgent challenge was to see how it might be developed and then applied.

Lock’s starting point was the axiom that planning had not merely to involve extensive dialogue with ordinary people. The citizens of a place, he insisted, were the ‘planner’s clients’ and ‘must be consulted in the same way as the clients of an architect are consulted’. In order to achieve this, he believed, planners needed to break with the ‘cosmetic’ and develop the ‘diagnostic’.

This entails a revolutionary change in two directions. In the use of the scientific-analytical method, on the one hand, and in the study of sociology and human problems, on the other. These two together form as it were the parallel tracks of a permanent way, upon which alone the vehicle of planning can traverse the crowded and difficult ground of contemporary life. Mere factual analysis can mean nothing apart from its complement, human sympathy and the sympathetic investigation of vital human needs which constitute the emerging live-rail of this track. Investigation by itself is not enough. It must see and know its goal. It must be linked to a long-term objective – an integrated environment.

In practical terms, Lock concluded, this meant that the planner could no longer work as a narrowly technical practitioner, but needed to interact with other disciplines, most importantly, he stressed, ‘the science of sociology.’

Planning Middlesbrough
After moving to Middlesbrough in the spring of 1944, Lock rented a two-stored suburban house, and began recruiting helpers. After a few weeks he had assembled a formidable group, which included the geographer A. E. Smails, the sociologist Ruth Glass, four planners, and 18 assistants (some part-time). Lock then turned to collecting raw material. The team scoured...
printed sources and also did much fieldwork. Lock himself, together with the other planners, surveyed the town’s housing, open spaces, transport and public utilities; Smalex examined the economy; while Glass completed an ambitious investigation of neighbourhood structure, health and education services, and the soil and water. Much of this work involved recording fairly predictable metrics. But the team was also able to tap into more subjective dimensions, because, fortuitously, the government’s Wartime Social Survey was persuaded to organise a comprehensive exercise in opinion, research, distributing detailed questionnaires to a randomly selected group, drawn from every twenty-three household, of 1,387 households and 1,289 other adults.¹⁰

Then came a fairly fevered period of analysis. Lock and his team transferred much of the raw data onto transparent maps, and learnt much from overlaying them in combination.¹¹ By the late spring of 1945 the plan was finished and in the hands of the council. Three months later, it was formally accepted ‘in principle’ and became official policy. The final version, complete with numerous maps and tables, was published in 1947. A book, entitled by Glass as summarised much of the fieldwork.¹²

‘A peoples’ plan?’ Lock aimed to construct a ‘peoples’ plan’. To what extent did he succeed? Two observations are pertinent. The first concerns popular interest in planning. Lock had always believed that it was part of the planner’s job to cultivate enthusiasm and debate, and as a result, he took a great deal of care in Middlesbrough to ensure that communication with ordinary people remained a priority.¹³ His team opened an office in the town centre; addressed many meetings with residents and community groups; gave interviews to the press and radio; produced ‘penny pamphlets’ on their main ideas, together with a popular version of the final plan; built models for display in local venues; and collaborated with the council on a major exhibition.¹⁴ Not all of these initiatives were equally successful. But it appears that Lock did at least partly achieve his goal. Most visitors to Middlesbrough directly before and after this time tended to view it as generally introverted, without a vibrant civic culture. Priestley labelled it a ‘dismal town’, whose chief passions were beer and football.¹⁵ Others concurred.¹⁶ Yet during 1944 and 1945, there was without doubt a pronounced upsurge in public engagement. Some 22,000 people, perhaps one-sixth of the population, visited the exhibition; an array of inhabitants, from industrialists to schoolchildren, took part in discussions about planning issues; and the plan itself was, for some months, a major topic of local conversation. Outsiders registered the change, with one informed observer, for example, reporting that the plan had ‘aroused a storm of protest and interest’.¹⁷ Given that some other planning schemes of this period provoked only marginal and fleeting comment from the population at large, this, in itself, was certainly a significant achievement.

Second, there is no doubt that Lock took what ordinary people wanted extremely seriously, and built their preferences into his final recommendations wherever possible, even at the expense of ignoring the conventional wisdom that was circulating amongst his peers. Two examples are germane. First, the local neighbourhood units. These were in vogue at the time, and so might have been expected to appear at the heart of the Middlesbrough plan. But in fact Lock took a rather more original approach, based upon a real respect for the evidence. The starting point was Glass’s enquiries into neighbourhood structure. Much planning discourse tended to treat the phenomenon of working-class community rather uncritically, perhaps through a rosy haze. Glass punctured some illusions. He demonstrated that ‘integrative’ neighbourhoods were both numerically rather rare and closely associated with ‘negative factors’ like ‘poverty and geographical isolation’. As such, they were hardly models for emulation. What planners should focus on, Glass argued, were places that better reflected how society was currently developing. The reality, he believed, was that the more affluent people became, the more they wanted ‘to pick and choose’—to look for, and perhaps pursue, social and institutional contacts outside their immediate street or area. Accordingly, the planner’s task, he concluded, was to design residential areas in a more flexible and holistic manner. He explained:

Convenient access to institutions is essential, but standards of convenience vary for different groups and for different types of services. There will inevitably be a good deal of inter-group movement, and the planner should, therefore, be closely related to each other. The pattern of urban areas should express and facilitate the coherence of groups of neighbourhoods; it should not be split up by a number of small subdivisions.

Of course, Lock might well have resisted this logic, but he did not. His plan certainly provided local services for the less mobile, and sited them at regular intervals.

But it also acknowledged that ‘the vast majority of healthy adolescents and adults’ required ‘easy access both to the centre of the town and to other neighbourhoods’, and drew the appropriate planning lessons, for example, that clubs and facilities should be sited between the town and rather than within them. This was as Lock understood, very different from ‘the somewhat romantic concept of the neighbourhood unit as a self-contained cell modelled on the lines of the village green’.¹⁸

Lock’s recommendations on suburbs were equally sensitive to popular priorities. The Wartime Social Survey had exhaustively analysed local peoples’ feelings about housing and planning, and discovered a deep antipathy for the urban lifestyle. An emphatic 90 per cent of ‘housewives’, 92 per cent of ‘working men’ and 93 per cent of ‘working women’ wanted gardens. More pointedly still, when questioned about where they would like to live, ‘a large section of the [local] population’ named Middlesbrough’s existing suburbs, because ‘of their open development, more modern housing and more healthy surroundings’.¹⁹ Some planners might have blanched at such findings, fearing that to justify sprawl and incursions into the green belt. But Lock took a more relaxed view. His approach balanced the desire for extensive development with the need to preserve both the countryside and what he saw as one of the town’s great advantages, the Cleveland Hills to the south. Six new estates would be built on the fringes of the town, ‘pointing southward towards the sun and view’, but each would be closely demarcated, separated out by ‘green wedges’ that flowed right into the city centre. As Lock explained, what he sought to create resembled the imprint of a spread out hand, with the estates as the fingers, and the wedges as the spaces in-between.²⁰ Again, this was a solution that gave due weight to what ordinary Middlesbrough people really wanted.

A forgotten tradition

Lock’s planning in Middlesbrough was innovative and significant. Many of his contemporaries recognised that popular participation in planning was important,²¹ but few gave it such salience or identified such a clear pathway for its implementation. Nevertheless, the whole episode made far less of an impact on developments over the next thirty years than might have been expected. Symptomatically, when planners, politicians, and community activists turned again to the problem of consultation at the end of the 1960s, few, if any, referred back to Lock’s magnum opus. Indeed, the widely shared view, best captured in David Eversley’s very influential The Planner in Society, was that all 1940s planning had been in essence an exercise in paternalism, with the planner and the planned operating, as in the earlier years, on entirely different ‘planes’.²² What explains this unexpected amnesia?

Part of the explanation lies with the man himself. Lock was an enthusiastic and able communicator, but he never wrote the textbook that might have spread his ideas more widely. Moreover, from the mid-1950s, Lock often worked abroad, and this, too, obviously lessened his impact. Finally, it is notable that Lock, in later life, anyway grew rather disillusioned, believing that the achievements of his heyday had been squandered. Addressing a RIBA audience in 1964, he characterised the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act as stultifying, a measure that imposed bureaucratic procedures at the expense of real engagement. His considered view, in fact, was that British planning had become ‘post-post’. Whether this was true or not, it hardly encouraged the view that the 1947s legacy might be a source of inspiration for a younger generation.

At the same time, broader factors also need to be acknowledged. At the heart of Lock’s wartime credo, as has been underlined, was the insistence that planners must necessarily work with sociologists. Yet this was always likely to attract controversy. The disciplines of planning sociology had grown up very different paths, and there was little sense of compatibility or dialogue among their practitioners.¹ One observer characterized the gulf between the two professions in the early 1950s as follows:

If, the planner were to ask for advice about the planning of a railway, and the frequency with which trains should be run along the lines...the sociologist would give him a report on the following very different phases, and there was little sense of compatibility or dialogue among their practitioners.¹ One observer characterized the gulf between the two professions in the early 1950s as follows:

In this situation, Lock could easily be perceived as a maverick, neither ‘one of us’ nor ‘one of them’, and thus far game for reviewers in the specialist journals.²³ Again, this hardly helped his reputation.

Political fashions, too, may have played their part. Lock held progressive views, as has been noted, but he was never reckless or sectarian. Questioned in 1944 about how he got along with Middlesbrough’s
councillors, he replied that they were ‘very reasonable and helpful’, and singled out the Conservative mayor for particular praise.43 But in the late 1960s, the tone of discussion was rather different. Some activists and academics took a much more polemical line, based upon neo-marxist concepts like the ‘local state’, and there was a general sense that planning was becoming highly political and therefore contentious. In this later context, Lock’s implicit belief in the importance of consensus inevitably seemed increasingly outdated.

Conclusion
Max Lock was an important Twentieth Century British planner, whose determination to ‘retain the imagination of the planned’44 gave his work in places like Middlesbrough a particular quality and integrity. As this paper has noted, Lock ultimately never received the attention that he deserved – and this is a reminder, if any was needed, that history can sometimes be the most unforgiving of arbiters.

Notes
6 Illustrated, 13 November 1944.
8 Max Lock et al., The Middlesbrough Survey and Plan, Middlesbrough: Middlesbrough Corporation, 1947.
9 Glass, ‘The Social Background’.
11 Illustrated, 11 October 1945; Max Lock Centre Exhibition Research Group, Max Lock, and Picture Post, 11 August 1945. The popular version of the plan was published as Max Lock, A Plan for Middlesbrough The Proposals in Outline, Middlesbrough: Middlesbrough Corporation, 1945, priced at 2/6d. See also Architect’s Journal, 2 August 1945.
15 For the background here, see Andrew Homer, Creating New Communities: The Role of the Neighbourhood Unit in Post-war British Planning, Contemporary British History, Vol. 14 No. 1, 2000, pp. 63-80.
16 Glass, ‘The Social Background’, p.43.
19 Illustrated, 11 October 1945; Lock, A Plan for Middlesbrough, pp. 90-1.
22 Max Lock Centre Exhibition Research Group, Max Lock, University of Westminster, Max Lock Archive, 9.27; Max Lock, ‘The Missing Half of Planning’, paper delivered at RBIA, 15 December 1964, p. 3 and passim.
26 Illustrated, 11 November 1944.
28 The Rio de Janeiro City Hall and the Department of Cultures, with the support of the City Archive, organized a photograph exhibition entitled Memory of Destruction – Rio, a History that was lost, inaugurated on December 14, 2001. The theme selected for the exhibition was the city of Rio de Janeiro between the years of 1889 and 1960; highlighting the violent interventions from the government and real estate speculation, which destroyed several memorable places of priceless historic, architectural and sentimental value.

The idea arose as of the occasion of the publication of the Decree set forth by mayor Cesar Mota in 2001, launching two new APAC’S (Areas for the Protection of the Cultural Environment) at Lelón and Laranjes (Rio de Janeiro district), which, once again, brought to public discussion the issue of the importance of preserving the city’s cultural heritage, a highly controversial idea, as it involves powerful interests from several sources. At the time, newspapers published a series of interviews in which city dwellers, architects and urbanists took a stand for and against the measures contemplated by this legislation. The purpose of the Decree was to bar the devastating wave that was assaulting both districts, two of the most pleasant districts of the city’s south region, thus making a choice for the population’s standard of living. Those who favoured the Decree affirmed that if similar measures had been taken in the past, the Rio Branco Avenue would nowadays be a landmark in our city’s history, and the one hundred years that elapsed after its inauguration would not have undergone a constant building and tearing down scenario, resulting in four succeeding generations of buildings.

The concern with the maintenance of material and immaterial city registers, as from a new concept of heritage, is very recent in Brazil - it dates back to the 1970s. Laterly, the preservationist view has acquired a more comprehensive meaning, for even though it has continued to give prestige to buildings and monuments, it has also started pricing their surroundings as well as cultural and natural contexts.

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The creation of the “Cultural Path” in the city, a pioneer project of city preservation that emerged in 1979, was decisive to prevent dozens of old houses in downtown Rio de Janeiro, some of which remain from the city’s original historic site, from the systematic destruction and character loss being implemented on account of predominant economic interests and lack of sensitivity on the part of some sectors, both public and private.

In the 1980’s the APAC’S emerged – preservation tools created as from the successful implementation of urban measures by the Cultural Path. The APAC’S are ideal for urban complexes, as they allow for their conservation without the severe restrictions imposed upon by historic preservation measures, being basically oriented by an attempt to preserve original volumetric features (façades and roofs), or the equivalent, of models chosen through technical studies, allowing, however, for internal modifications that would not interfere with external original features. They have also had the privilege of extending protection to other urban regions’ real estate, so as to prevent its aspect to be completely changed by random intervention without the participation and agreement from the major interested parties: those who spend their lives in those areas.

The City Archive, in the capacity of an agency managing the City’s Memorial System, then sought to be a part of, and more fully integrate itself into this discussion. This involves institutions, architects, urbanists, historians, anthropologists, all concerned with the preservation of memory, which is what is at stake here, that is, the preservation of architectural, historical and cultural registries still present in Rio de Janeiro. Its precious collection – photographs, blueprints, maps, written documents and caricatures – lends itself very well to this purpose, as it brings to the present the former Rio de Janeiro, unknown to the majority of its dwellers, and promotes comparisons between the past and the present.

Thus, the exhibit Memory of Destruction – Rio, a History that was lost, was conceived so that the large
urban interventions implemented by those who held the power, whether or not delegated, for the purpose of transforming the urban stratum according to their intentions, political and/or financial interests, were shown to a substantial number of people and contributed towards a discussion over which city everyone wanted to live in and wished for future generations. In spite of underplaying the action, often ineffectual, of its "renovators", Rio de Janeiro still is, apart from its ever so celebrated natural beauty, owner of priceless cultural heritage, worthy of being acknowledged and disseminated.

Therefore, before the eyes of the exhibit's visitors — who had the opportunity of undertaking a true journey in time — there was a succession of images of a Rio de Janeiro that remained only in the memory of the elderly or in the city's visual documentation. Divided into five modules, the exhibit evidenced, in a didactic and chronological manner, the main urban changes that occurred.

Initially, in the period just after the Proclamation of the Republic (1889), in the midst of the political conflict and economic crises following the consolidation of power, there was an initial attempt to do away with everything that recalled Monarchy and the backwardness which, according to the new regime, that form of government represented. One of the first matters opposed was that of tenement houses, many of them being the property of important people of Rio de Janeiro society. (Photo 1) Mayor Barata Ribeiro intended to eradicate all tenement and rooming houses, albeit he ran out of time, as his government lasted only five months (1892-93). The most important of such tenement houses, called "Pig Head" was "impressively" demolished in only one day, in a true "field battle". There were not, however, enough places to shelter all the people who were evacuated and who, in large numbers and making use of debris, lodged themselves on the neighbouring Providence mountains, helping consolidate its occupation by a low-income population, more strongly initiated after the Camados Rebellion, in the state of Bahia.

Photographs of the opening of Central Avenue, between 1903 and 1905, nowadays called Rio Branco avenue, evidenced the destruction of a large number of houses from the time when Brazil was a colony of empire, which were substituted by Beaux Arts buildings, following an urban health and beauty concept duplicated in Rio by mayor Pereira Passos. In turn, nearly the total number of eclectic-style buildings — built on that new avenue and the result of a large international façade contest — do not exist any longer, in their place huge buildings — at first art deco and proto-modern, later, modern, and finally, contemporary — have totally modified the urban scale and landscape idealized and accomplished by Pereira Passos. (Photos 2 and 3)

In 1922, the demolition of the Castelo mountain removed the very cradle of the city from existence, overrunning the Fortress, the School of Jesuits, the Saint José Seminary, the Saint Sebastian Church, and the Observatory, leaving as a souvenir a small section of the Monserrate (Mercy slope). (Photo 5) The excuse given was that of ventilating the downtown area to eradicate the epidemics caused by "mismanagement", thus disguising the real intention of its administrators to sweep away from the downtown area the poor population who hung clothes outdoors and herded its goats on the mountain's slopes, a scene that could be viewed by passer-by who strolled down Central avenue, a symbol of modernity and civilization, a Brazilian financial, commercial and cultural centre. On the large stretch of land where the mountain was, pavilions were built of the states and countries that took part in the International Exhibition held that year to celebrate the Brazilian Independence Centennial. Those also had a short period of existence, as only a few buildings remained from this impressive exhibit, such as those which house the Museum of Image and Sound and the Brazilian Academy of Letters.

The opening of President Vargas Avenue, an icon of the "New State", inaugurated in 1944, allowed for a direct link between the north region and downtown; however, it resulted in the loss of expression of landmarks of our history, such as the eighteenth century churches of Saint Domingos, of Lord Jesus of the Calvary, of Our Lady of Conception, in addition to the church of Saint Peter of Clarymen, a jewel of baroque art. Another loss was that of Praça Onze (Eleven Square), a public park the name of which persists in the minds of Rio de Janeiro dwellers, one of the cradles of samba, the main Brazilian rhythm. There, musicians got together, those whose musical work became Brazilian Popular Music classics; there, the population also organized, within Schools of Samba, associations began emerging at the beginning of the 20th century, and the famous low dance hall! Kananga of Japan was built. The square was also famous by the harmonious integration among immigrants (Jews, Arabs, Italians, Spaniards and Portuguese) who lived and worked in that area and other neighbouring areas and who contributed with their traditions, habits and costumes to make it very special and distinguished.

Other landmarks and buildings of great historic and/or architectural meaning were lost, the names of which have remained as survivals as the designations of parks...
located where they had once been, such as the Mourisco Pavilion on the Beira-Mar Avenue, the Municipal Markts and the Monte Palace, in Cineilandia, are evidence of that destructive rage.

As regards natural heritage losses, the profile of the Rodrigo de Freitas lagoon was systemically being modified since 1875, giving rise to imbalances in its fragile ecological system. Several projects and ideas were put forth — many of them extraordinary, such as that of a complete landfill in order to solve environmental and sanitation problems of the lagoon, but in concrete terms, there was only the addition of soil to its borders. At first isolated points; however, as from the 20th century, comprising more substantial official modifications. Just now, some illegal landfills, in spite of their historic preservation in the 80’s, are taking away areas of the lagoon’s water table, which has lost over one third of its original area. (Photo 6)

In the 60’s, the destruction provoked by the works carried out at “Terre do Flamengo” Flamingo Landfill) accounted for irreparable losses of its landscape and affective nature, such as the loss of the Saint Amoio mountain and its rows of houses. Once again, the Rio de Janeiro dwellers were kept away from the area, due to the disappearance of the very water line coasted by buildings along the Beira-Mar avenue, so closely linked to water sports, keg beer served at the Mourisco and Regattas pavilions, and to hikes on the Flamengo Beach.

The Flamengo Park was designed by the Flamengo Park Work Group, managed by the “imponent” Ms. “Lota”. The Flamengo Landfill, located between the Santos Dumont Airport and Botafogo Bay (Photo 4), consolidated the quick connection through expressways between the Downtown area and the South Region. Comprising an area of 1 million 200 thousand m², it currently has a museum, a puppet theater, a bandstand, areas for airplane and ship scale model activities, multiple-sports courts, a playground, gardens, an artificial beach with 1,500 meters of extension and soccer fields, making up one of the most pleasant leisure areas in the city. Thus, the losses undergone were offset, which was not the case with the best part of the renovations undertaken in the city.

That is how we started, as time went by — and was worse, in a short period of time — losing at each intervention, as small as it could be, at times slowly, at others fast, some of our connection with the continuity of our history.

We could mention other sorts of abuse practiced in the name of “modern times” and “civilization”, which would undoubtedly constitute a much more accurate testimony of the importance of having legislation for the preservation of city culture, and of the existence of protection mechanisms which, instead of preventing development, would contribute towards the harmonious relationship between what should be preserved, a result of discussions among all those interested, and the natural need for urban expansion and growth.

But what should be preserved? It is not the case of keeping alive the registry unchanged. In addition to this being impossible — the cycle of life must be respected in all its structures — the city is fascinating due to its dynamics — building/destroying, re-constructing/ demolishing, in sum, a succession of “yeses” and “no’s. The important issue is to respect some basic values — which will always be interacting with time and modifying themselves — so that the city’s line of evolution does not break abruptly, producing gaps and voids, incomprehensible cuts in the ephemeral or punctual existence of its dwellers.

Therefore, all opportunities for reflection about a city we once had, which we now have, and that we would like to have, what could be changed without breaking with tradition, and what should be preserved to keep the ties that ensure the cultural identity or Rio de Janeiro dwellers and their standard of living, are welcome.

We should turn our attention towards, not only be curious about, but mostly inquire about, the various interventions carried out in the urban stratum and which have caused the city to lose its features, rendering it less beautiful and more inhospitable. To think about how wild and random growth could have been avoided and which legal measures could have been enforced to bar the uncommitted action of speculators would be extremely timely at a moment when all — public administrators, urbanists, intellectuals, artists and city dwellers — are attentive to the problem, and as from several points of view, would bring forward extremely relevant discussions over the ideal city, expecting to leave for their descendants as a legacy, a place that would be like home, irrespective of the walls and barriers that separate individuals from society. A place where public would not only be an extension of private, but a place for peaceful and democratic interaction.

The exhibit Memory of Destruction — Rio, A History that was lost consisted mostly of the possibility, endorsed by nearly 4,000 visitors while it was shown in the City Archive, and by an inconsiderable number of people, for nearly 2 months in a 13,000 square feet of city’s main subway station — of exercising our democratic right of learning about history and past facts, trying to understand them, fully practising our status of citizens, and making use of such knowledge in the present time, for all cities are a result of the actions and omissions of their administrators and mainly, of their citizens.

Bibliography


English translation — Lenora Hupfel

Notes

1 When the capital of Brazil was transferred from Rio de Janeiro to Brasilia by Kubitschek.
2 During the period covered by the exhibit, Brazil went through arbitrary periods in which rulers (governors and mayors) were several times appointed by those in power and not elected by popular vote.
3 Officially defined as “...collective dwelling, generally made up of small wooden rooms or light constructions sometimes built in back of buildings or one above the other, with porches and stairs of difficult access: without a kitchen and with or without a small patio, area or hallway; with a community, bathroom and laundry room...” tenement houses were absolutely sovereign with their rooms, entrances and designations that were often confused — as the most economical alternative to lowest classes — of the city of Rio de Janeiro up to the start of the 20th century.
4 Located at 154 Barão de São Félix Street — Downtown, and which people also called, because there was a pig head made of wrought iron above its entrance. One of its owners was Count D’Huish, husband of Princess Isabel, daughter of the deposed Emperor Pedro II.
5 There are several versions written by historians over the appearance of the 1st city slums. Among such versions, one made reference to the time when the Canudos Rebellion came to an end, at which time “inundáveis” (women who escorted troops for the purpose of selling food, soldiers from other states seeking government support and assistance, and vagabonds and beggaresses lodged themselves there, strengthening an already existing and beginning occupation of the mountain’s foot.
6 Which also led to construction of wide boulevards that tore through the heart of the city, once a small place, with narrow, crooked and poorly lit streets.
7 Thither called, in contemporary studies, “tropical Haussmann”, in reference to the baron who remodelled Paris.
8 Which contemplated historic references in a vast repertoire of “no’s” and not only made use of Greek, Roman, Egyptian, Persian and Gothic influences, but also the most imposing historicizing them.
9 The oldest access to the mountain, and which nowadays does not exist.
10 As the Getúlio Vargas dictatorship period was called, in which imposing works were accomplished inspired by the fascist cause.
11 A hill where people dance the samba.
12 A restaurant with bulbous golden towers designed by architect Alfredo Bazzani, built at Botafogo Beach in 1903 and torn down in the 50’s.
The Municipal Market of Fifteenth of November Square was the most significant example of "iron architecture" built in Brazil. Designed by Alfredo Azevedo Marques, it was a 190 meters sideways and made up of 24 single, trapezoidal pavilions, in addition to five octagonal pavilions (one central and another four at the extremities of its square layout) with two floors, totalling nearly 25,000m2 of built area. Its parts were supplied by distinguished manufacturers – Hoppins, Causse & Hoppins from Birmingham, and Willenbroek from Brussels – and work starting in 1903.

14 Designed by Marcelino de Souza Aguiar (later city mayor between 1907 and 1910) to be the Palace of Brazil at the Saint Louis International Exhi- bit of 1904 (receiving the Gold Medal of Architecture), was torn down and re-built at the bottom of Central avenue in 1906 to be the seat of the Third International American Convention; and later assisted several federal bodies, mainly the Senate, being torn down at the end of the 70s.
15 The date of its oldest cartographic registry drawn up by João Francisco Roscio.

16 The systematisation of the mountain's excavation works, which had been previously started, dates back to 1932 under Dalcido Cardoso's government. However, they only had a boost as of the creation of SURSAN (Urbanization and Sanitation Superintendence) under the Negrão de Lima's government (1956-58).

17 A consequence of the passion of Maria Carlota "Letia" de Macedo Soares (at the time, friends with the American poetess Elizabeth Bishop), its creator, and with the support of the first governor of the State of Guanabara, Carlos Lucena (1906-15), the park was built by a Work Group made up by experts in the areas of urbanism, architecture, landscaping, engineering, botanic and education (Affonso Eduardo Reidy, Jorge Machado Moreira, Serges Bernardes, Burle Marx, Berta Leitchie and Luiz Emídio de Mello Filho, among others).
18 Nearly 38,000 people travel through this station (Carioca) daily.

Book Reviews


As Cody notes at the beginning of his introduction, the destruction to the World Trade Center towers in 2001 was not only a terrible waste of life but an attack on the iconic symbols of American architectural modernity. Mohammed Atta, a leading plotter of the attacks, is reported to have said that ‘high rise buildings had desecrated Egypt.’

Exporting American Architecture is thus a highly topical as well as an original book that assesses the role not only of American architects but also of engineers, construction companies and manufacturers in the selling and assembling of American expertise abroad. The first two chapters examine the exporting of steel-frame and concrete technologies during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Bridge-building and skyscrapers symbolised the American presence, and provided large American profits. Following the First World War, American builders engaged even more enthusiastically in major and not so large construction projects abroad, for example in Latin America and China, the subject matter of chapters three and four. Becoming ‘a paradigm for progress’ by the Second World War, American design and construction continued to spread across the globe. Hence subsequent chapters expand on the expansive and energetic US contribution to the architecture of war and peace from World War Two and during the Cold War (chapter 5). The Marshall Plan and US Government intervention greatly assisted the American presence in business and construction. During the 1980s the transition to a new world order continued to be characterised by American technology and its imagery: it was at the heart of the rise of ‘High-Tech’ era. The Cheung Kong Centre in Hong Kong, with its curtain wall, ‘linen steel’ and fibre optic lighting was one of many striking new buildings, as the photographs of it from both distance and close-up, demonstrate.

As this last point also demonstrates, the book is very well illustrated indeed, and many of the photographs, maps and diagrams enhance the understanding of the text, whether it is homes, bridges or commercial skyscrapers that are being discussed.

Cody’s sources are diverse, including architectural, engineering and construction trade journals, from the USA and other countries. He has also lived in many of the countries that he is writing about, and this lends the book an engaging and readable quality that mediates the often formal language of planning and architectural histories. As Cody points out a number of times in the book, business-minded and construction-minded entrepreneurs was not always aware of or tuned into the nuances and differences of other cultures. Nonetheless, many countries benefited from the importing of infrastructure that the Americans brought, often more cheaply and efficiently than their competitors. The British, for example, were outbid by American businesses in late nineteenth century Africa. More generally, the export-import relationship was an active one and governments of countries that were poor or relatively affluent often actively sought American expertise.

Exporting American Architecture is an attractive and useful account of a neglected history, strongly deserving to be on the reading lists of many courses concerned with globalisation and the built environment.

Mark Clapson,
University of Westminster,
UK.
Book Reviews

Carola HEIN, Jeffrey M. DIEFENDORF and Yorifusa ISHIDA (Eds.),
Rebuilding Urban Japan after 1945

This book is a welcome and useful addition to the growing field of studies on Japanese planning by covering material that at up to now has only been available in Japanese. The book’s main focus is on the reconstruction of Japanese cities following the Second World War. The book’s 10 authors mainly look at the reasons for the successes and failures of Japanese post-War planning and some compare Japanese planning with other countries.

The first of these issues is addressed by Yorifusa Ishida, one of Japan’s foremost planning historians whose works remains largely unpublished in English. The author details the scale of devastation following the War and addresses the question of why, despite a history of earthquake-related destruction and rebuilding, did the effective planning of Japan’s cities come so low on the central government’s list of priorities. Though the scale of destruction wreaked on Japanese cities can be seen in other works (e.g. Dowser’s Embracing Defeat) Ishida juxtaposes this with details on the efforts made by Japanese planners to implement their idealistic schemes – most famously the green belt around Tokyo – and the opposition that this generated. Such opposition came from the American forces’ General Headquarters but was also exacerbated by the considerable pressures of inflation, housing demand, population growth and the need for economic reconstruction. Overall, this chapter offers a much more balanced view of the apparent failure to effectively plan Japanese cities following the War than is traditionally advocated or assumed. For example, the author points out that though the ratio of successfully implemented land readjustment schemes around Tokyo was very low, the ideas that post-War reconstruction generated at the time were later taken up and incorporated in subsequent legislation. Finally, Ishida argues that the real measure of Japan’s planning failure is the lack of a system to adequately represent the public interest against land-owners’ rights and the demands of central government.

These conclusions subsequently occur as themes in the book’s case studies. Matsumoto for example, looks at the reconstruction of Nagaoka, a small provincial city. He points out how the reconstruction was dominated by short-term goals which came at the expense of long-term objectives and the suggestions of the community’s own locally-based planners. In a detailed account of Hiroshima’s reconstruction, Ishimaru highlights the role of Tange Kenzo’s architecture to create a peace memorial park. However, though this reconstruction was successfully implemented, it failed to resolve the conflict between the public interest and the private land-owners rights which remain a problem to this day.

Other authors focus on the way that Japanese planning achieved successes through two case studies, noting the exceptional circumstances under which this was possible. Ishikawa looks at the reconstruction of Kabuki-cho near Shinjuku in Tokyo. He highlights the role of a triumvirate of visionary developer, entrepreneur and local government in implementing the plan. Such a triumvirate had been important in reconstructing other parts of Tokyo, such as Ginza and Asakusa and allowed the schemes to prevail at a time when Tokyo’s War Damage Rehabilitation plan was being scaled-back. Tucker on the other hand, shows the considerable success that Japanese planners had in planning colonial cities during the pre-War era. This case shows the planners learnt a great deal from their experiments in the colonies but that this success was related to the suppression of land-owners’ rights.

The second issue that the book addresses is comparing Japan and other countries. Hasegawa looks at the efforts of Osaka’s planners to implement much-needed improvements to harbour infrastructure and designate urban parks in the face of opposition from local citizens and upper levels of government. He first points out a principal similarity between the UK and Japan that the governments put pressure in both countries to curtail city planning. However, Hasegawa highlights important differences in both cases that led to a relatively successful reconstruction in the case of the UK. In the UK, though central-local battles existed, it could by no means be assumed that the demands of central government would subsume those of the local planners and their communities. This was not the case with Japan.

Diefendorf highlights the different challenges that Germany and Japan faced at the end of the War. The author here notes the important role of the local planners in allowing the reconstruction to go ahead. In Japan on the other hand, this local interest was subdued as part of the central government’s overall aim. Additionally the author shows how Germany and Japan differed to the extent to which they were prepared for the reconstruction, the pressures caused by population growth and the differing extent to which aesthetics were considered in the reconstruction. Hein also considers this difference and places the wartime reconstruction in the context of the present-day Japanese city. She points out how the rush to modernise Japanese cities has had just as much effect on the form of cities as the American bombs – as can be seen in the case of Kyoto.

Marco Amati
University of Tsukuba
Japan

Some of the author’s writing styles can make reading a little difficult at times and a knowledge of Japanese planning is required before tackling some chapters. This is mitigated by the inclusion of a glossary and the book’s main overall strength, which is to juxtapose a wide-range of issues related to the development of Japanese cities. In particular, it is likely to remain required reading for any researcher or student wishing to reach a deeper understanding of Japanese planning.
Recent Publications: Working Papers

Peter J. Larkham,
New Suburbs and Postwar Reconstruction: The Fate of Charles Reilly’s ‘Greens’

Faculty of the Built Environment, School of Planning and Housing,

Abstract

‘Of the production of the numerous “reconstruction plans” that appeared in wartime and postwar Britain, many explicitly proposed substantial restructuring of residential areas and the creation of new ones, either as slum clearance operations, reconstruction of bomb-damaged areas, or to house growing populations. Yet many of these grandiose proposals were never developed.

One of the most striking visions for such areas was that of Professor Sir Charles Reilly, originally in response to the Borough Engineer’s proposals for an area in Birkenhead. Reilly developed the idea of small communal ‘greens’. The idea was widely publicised in a book that made much of the possibilities of communal facilities and living, and in turn this was seized upon by the Town Clerk of Bilston. Reilly was employed as a consultant, and suggested former students and friends to design several of these estates. The Town Clerk moved to Dudley, and again Reilly’s ideas were put into practice.

Yet virtually none of these estates were built as Reilly intended. The Ministry of Health exerted exceptionally tight control over finance and design, local conditions were not ideal, there was some local resistance, and the movement of the Town Clerk on two occasions appears to have led to a decline in priority. After Reilly’s death in 1948 little more was heard of these radically innovative designs; the estates that were built did not have the communal facilities and have since lost their unique characteristics, and many have become problem estates.

Edited by Peter Larkham and Joe Nasr,
The Rebuilding of British Cities: Exploring the Post Second World War Reconstruction

Faculty of the Built Environment, School of Planning and Housing,
University of Central England, Working Paper Series, No. 90, 2004

Contains the following chapters based upon the Proceedings of a Workshop sponsored by the Faculty of the Built Environment, UCE, and the IPHS:

Peter J. Larkham, ‘The reconstruction plans’
John Pendlebury, ‘The reconstruction planners’
Nicholas Bullock, ‘Designing the rebuilt city’
Keith D. Lilley, ‘Experiencing the plan’
Stephen V. Ward, ‘Linkages between reconstructions’
Joe Nasr, ‘Comparisons across reconstructions’

The working papers are available from Peter J. Larkham, costing £5: peter.larkham@ucc.ac.uk
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PRESIDENT

Dr Robert Freestone
Planning and Urban Development Program
Faculty of the Built Environment
University of New South Wales
Sydney NSW 2052
Australia

Tel: 02 9385 4836
Fax: 02 9901 4505

E-mail: R.Freestone@unsw.edu.au

EDITOR OF PLANNING HISTORY

Dr Mark Clapson
6 Forrabury Avenue
Bradwell Common
Milton Keynes
MK13 8NG
UK

Tel: 01908 668548

E-mail: mjciphs@aol.com

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