8
Urban Planning and Policy

Preview: the roots of urban planning; post-war urban planning in the UK; urban policy in the UK; the redevelopment phase; the social-welfare phase; the entrepreneurial phase; the competitive phase; the 'Third Way'; urban planning in the USA; land-use zoning; growth management; smart growth; planning the socialist city; socialist urban form; planning for sustainable urban development

INTRODUCTION

The development of most urban areas is influenced, to some degree, by the processes of urban policy and urban planning. In this chapter we examine the nature and operation of urban policy and planning in the UK, Europe and the USA from its origins in the nineteenth century until the present day. Urban planning and urban policy are concerned with the management of urban change. They are state activities that seek to influence the distribution and operation of investment and consumption processes in cities for the 'common good'. However, it is important to recognise that urban policy is not confined to activity at the urban scale. National and international economic and social policies are as much urban policy, if defined by their urban impacts, as is land-use planning or urban redevelopment. In effect, urban policy is often made under another name. Urban policy and planning are dynamic activities whose formulation and interpretation are a continuing process. Measures introduced cause changes that may resolve some problems but create others, for which further policy and planning are required. Furthermore, only rarely is there a simple, optimum solution to an urban problem. More usually a range of policy and planning options exists from which an informed choice must be made[1] (Box 8.1).

Planning is carried out within the broad framework of government policy-making and has its general objectives set out in legislation. A primary objective of the UK planning system is 'to regulate the development and use of land in the public interest' (Department of the Environment 1999 p. 2).[2] Planning can be undertaken for a variety of reasons (Table 8.1). The aims of urban planning may be contradictory and reveal differing attitudes to the roles of the market mechanism and the state. Central to this debate is the question 'planning for whom?' While most of the purposes of planning listed in Table 8.1 assume that benefits should accrue to the 'public as a whole' or, in relation to redistribution aims, to the poorer and less vocal sections of society, the question of the validity of these goals and the extent to which they are met has produced polarised views on the value of planning (Box 8.2).

Scanned with CamScanner

THE ROOTS OF URBAN PLANNING

THE UK

With the exception of various forms of 'planted settlements' (e.g. Greek colonial towns or medieval planned new towns, *bas tides*), the forces underlying urban growth have operated largely free of any form of public accountability, so that for much of the historical period urban development proceeded in an unregulated organic fashion. Today a powerful system of planning exists in the UK and Europe, and to a lesser extent in North America, which aims

BOX 8.1

The nature of urban policy

Urban policy is the product of the power relation between the different interest groups that constitute a particular society. Foremost among these agents are government (both local and national) and capital in its various fractions. Capital and government pursue specific goals that may be either complementary or contradictory. For capital the prime directive is profit maximisation. Government, on the other hand, in addition to facilitating the process of accumulation, must also satisfy the goal of legitimation. These political and economic imperatives have a direct influence on the nature of urban policy. Urban policy is also conditioned by external forces operating within the global system, as well as by locally specific factors and agents.

The form of urban policy employed depends on the problem to be addressed and, most fundamentally, on the ideological position of the state. Adherents of market capitalism view the production of unevenly developed cities as the inevitable outcome of technological change in an economic system that readily adapts to innovation. The negative socio-spatial effects of this restructuring that impinge on disadvantaged people and places are regarded as unavoidable consequences of a process that is of benefit to society as a whole. For those on the political right, market forces are the most efficient allocators of capital and labour, and state intervention is considered unnecessary. Policies involving social-welfare expenditure and government financial aid to declining cities are regarded as harmful because they anchor low-wage workers to sites of low employment opportunity, discourage labour-force participation and inhibit labour mobility. Welfare state liberals, on the other hand, while accepting the central role of the market, acknowledge that the institutional and cyclical 'market imperfections' that have left certain people and places in prolonged economic distress must be rectified by compensatory government policies.

to circumscribe urban development and direct it towards socially beneficial goals.

For urban planning to exist, there must be a political consensus that the problems affecting cities can best be tackled through government intervention.

Scanned with CamScanner

TABLE 8.1 THE MAIN GOALS OF PLANNING

1.	To improve the information available to the market for making its locational choices
2.	To minimise the adverse 'neighbourhood effects' created by a market in land and development
3.	To ensure the provision of any 'public goods', including infrastructure or actions that create a positive 'neighbourhood effect', which the market will not generate because such activity cannot be rewarded through the market
4.	To ensure that short-term advantage does not jeopardise long-term community interest
5.	To contribute to the co-ordination of resources and development in the interest of overall efficiency of land use
6.	To balance competing interests in the use of land to ensure an overall outcome that is in the public interest
7.	To create a good environment, for example in terms of landscape, layout or aesthetics of buildings, that would not result from market processes
8.	To foster the creation of 'good' communities in terms of social composition, scale or mix of development, and a range of services and facilities available
9.	To ensure that the views of all groups are included in the decision-making processes regarding land and development
10.	To ensure that development and land use are determined by people's needs, not means
11.	To influence locational decisions regarding land use and development in order to contribute to the redistribution of wealth in society

Source: **A.Thornley (1991)** ***Urban Planning under Thatcherism*** **London: Routledge**

This, in turn, requires willingness by individuals to relinquish some of the rights to property which they enjoy in a free market and to accept the principle that land use should be centrally controlled for the public good.[6] In general, while electorates in the UK and Europe have accepted the implications of a comprehensive system of urban planning, in the USA government intervention in urban development is more restricted, with zoning being the major mechanism for land-use control.

Urban planning emerged as a response to the manifest problems of the nineteenth-century industrial metropolis (see Chapter 3). Two types of reaction were evident. The first, represented in the work of Marx and Engels, was revolutionary and

BOX 8.2

The value of planning

Urban planning is a ubiquitous activity in the modern world. Nevertheless, the principles and practice of planning have come under attack from both the left and the right of the political spectrum. In contrast to the positive goals identified in Table 8.1, the value of planning has been dismissed by the far left, which regards it as a state apparatus

Scanned with CamScanner

attuned to the needs of capital and designed to maintain the unequal distribution of power in society. Reade (1987), for example, concludes that the legitimacy of the property-development industry and its associated financial institutions is maintained by having a 'planning system' that provides a pretence of government intervention in the 'public interest'.[3]

For some critics on the right, planning is seen as a major *cause* of inner-city decline and social unrest through its policies of clearance and decentralisation, rigid land-use zoning and imposition of standards. According to Steen (1981), because of planning, resources are fruitlessly channelled into deprived areas and wasted rather than encouraging wealth creation.[4] For others the chief problems of planning lie in its interference with the market and in the fact that, contrary to the goals of planning, a dynamic and prosperous urban economy requires *inefficiency* in its structure and land use in order to permit innovation and experimentation.[5] The New Right attack on the redistributive goals of urban planning in the UK was articulated most forcibly by the Conservatives under Margaret Thatcher during the 1980s.

advocated the overthrow of the social and political system responsible for creating the polarised social conditions that characterised urban Britain. The conservative alternative involved basic acceptance of the urban industrial system but the use of state intervention to ameliorate its worst excesses. It was the latter argument, articulated in the UK by the factory and sanitary reformers, and reinforced by the success of a number of early housing and new town schemes, that paved the way for the emergence of modern urban planning.[7]

The belief that designing new communities offered a means of escape from the problems of the nineteenth-century industrial city was central to the ideas of the Utopian socialists. Robert Owen (1813) proposed the creation of 'agricultural and manufacturing villages of unity and mutual co-operation' to house between 1,000 and 1,500 persons and cater for all the social, educational and employment needs of the community. Owen's model industrial complex at New Lanark in Scotland promised superior working and living conditions, cheap subsidised shops based on bulk-buying of all household necessities, and a community school or 'Institution for the Formation of Character', which operated as a day school for children and a night school for adults. Owen's example led to the development of a number of other model towns.[8]

The social reformer and architect James Silk Buckingham (1849) proposed a Utopian temperance community of 10,000 to be named Victoria.[9] The plan envisaged segregation of land uses, with manufacturing trades and noxious land uses near the periphery, and housing and offices in the inner areas. All dwellings were to have flushing toilets and there would be a variety of house sizes to accommodate different households. Public baths were to be provided in each quarter of the town. A **green belt** of 4,000 ha (10,000 acres) of agricultural land would surround the settlement. All land was to be owned by the development company and buildings occupied for rent. Although Victoria was never built, many of the ideas were taken up by later urban reformers, including Ebenezer Howard in his designs for **garden cities** (see below).

Several smaller Utopian communities were started (Table 8.2). Among the most significant were Saltaire and Bournville. Saltaire was built by Titus Salt to replace his woollen mills in Bradford by a single large factory and a new town for the workforce. He

Scanned with CamScanner

selected a greenfield site crossed by a canal and railway, and between 1851 and 1871 completed a model industrial town of 820 dwellings and a population of 4,389. The town was endowed with a variety of community buildings and parks, and although the residential density of thirty-two houses (170 persons) per acre (eighty houses or 420 persons per hectare) appears crowded by today's standards, it represented a marked improvement on working-class living conditions of the time. The model town of Bournville built by George Cadbury also involved the transfer of factory production from an inner-city to a greenfield site but was the result of a wider concept than Saltaire. From the outset Bournville was intended to be not only a company town but also a general example to society of how it was possible to provide decent living con-

TABLE 8.2 PLANNED SETTLEMENTS IN EIGHTEENTH—AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY BRITAIN

Settlement name	*Company/family*	*Location*	*Industry*	*Date started*
Cromford	Arkwright	Derbyshire	Textiles	1772
Styal	Greg	Cheshire	Cotton textiles	1784
New Lanark	Arkwright/Dale/Owen	Lanarkshire	Cotton textiles	1785
Nent Head	London Lead Co.	N. Yorkshire	Lead	1825
Turton	Ashworth	Bolton	Textiles	1825
Barrow Bridge	Gardener/Bazley	Lancashire	Textiles	1830
Street	Clark	Somerset	Footwear	1833
Meltham Mills	Brooks	Huddersfield	Cotton thread	1836
Copley	Akroyd	Halifax	Textiles	1844
Wilshaw	Hirst	Huddersfield	Textiles	1849
Saltaire	Salt	Bradford	Textiles	1851
Bromborough Pool	Price	Wirral	Candles	1853
Akroydon	Akroyd	Halifax	Textiles	1861
West Hill Park	Crossley	Halifax	Carpets	1864
Bournville	Cadbury	Birmingham	Cocoa	1878
Port Sunlight	Lever	Wirral	Soap	1888
Foyers	British Aluminium	Loch Ness	Aluminium	1895

ditions without endangering company profits. With its cottage houses, large gardens, open space and community facilities built around the chocolate factory, Bournville set new standards of working-class living (Figure 8.1).

In quantitative terms the nineteenth-century model towns contributed little to the problems of the factory slums in the large cities, but they did stimulate reformers to

Scanned with CamScanner

question the morality and economic necessity of such living conditions. The idealism of the Utopian socialists was mirrored at the turn of the century in the ideas of Ebenezer Howard (1898).[10] Howard, with London in mind, was strongly critical of living conditions in the large towns. His alternative was to design a garden city based on the following principles:

1. Each garden city would be limited in size to 32,000 population.
2. It would have sufficient jobs to make it self-supporting.
3. It would have a diversity of activities, including social institutions.
4. Its layout would be spacious.
5. It would have a green belt to provide agricultural produce, recreation space and a limit to physical growth.
6. The land would be owned by the municipality and leased to private concerns, thereby reserving any increases in land value to the community as a whole.
7. Growth would occur by colonisation.

Howard did not envisage building isolated towns but advocated a cluster arrangement of six interdependent garden cities, connected by a rapid transport route around a central city of 58,000 population, the whole comprising a 'social city' of 250,000 people (Figure 8.2). Howard's ideal of a 'town-country' lifestyle led to the founding, in 1899, of the Garden City Association, which built two garden cities, at Letchworth (1901) and Welwyn (1920), and was a major stimulus to the formation in 1914 of the Town Planning Institute.

A second, parallel stimulus to urban planning in the UK was the sanitary-reform movement. This was stimulated by concern over the health of the urban population as a succession of epidemics ravaged the densely packed inner areas of the major British cities (see Chapter 3). The deficiency of public facilities, such as a clean water supply and adequate sewerage system, reinforced arguments for government intervention, and under pressure from enlightened politicians such as Shaftesbury, Torrens, Cross and Chadwick legislation was passed to establish basic levels of sanitary provision and building standards. The 1875 Public Health Act consolidated previous measures and introduced a set of codes in respect of the construction of new streets, and the structure of houses and their sanitary facilities, and also gave local authorities the power to close down dwellings that were unfit for human habitation. These measures did much to reduce levels of morbidity and early mortality in the nineteenth-century city.

THE USA

The roots of urban planning in the USA can be traced to the ideas of the Progressive Intellectuals of the late nineteenth century. In examining the shortcomings of American capitalism this loose-knit group of sociologists, economists and political scientists, including White, Dewey, Cooley and Park, recognised a need for public intervention in, through not control of, the economy.[11] Among suggestions for government regulation of business, employment and politics in cities they advocated the appointment of specially trained experts to manage cities. Designers sought to create more humane living environments. Landscape architects such as

Scanned with CamScanner

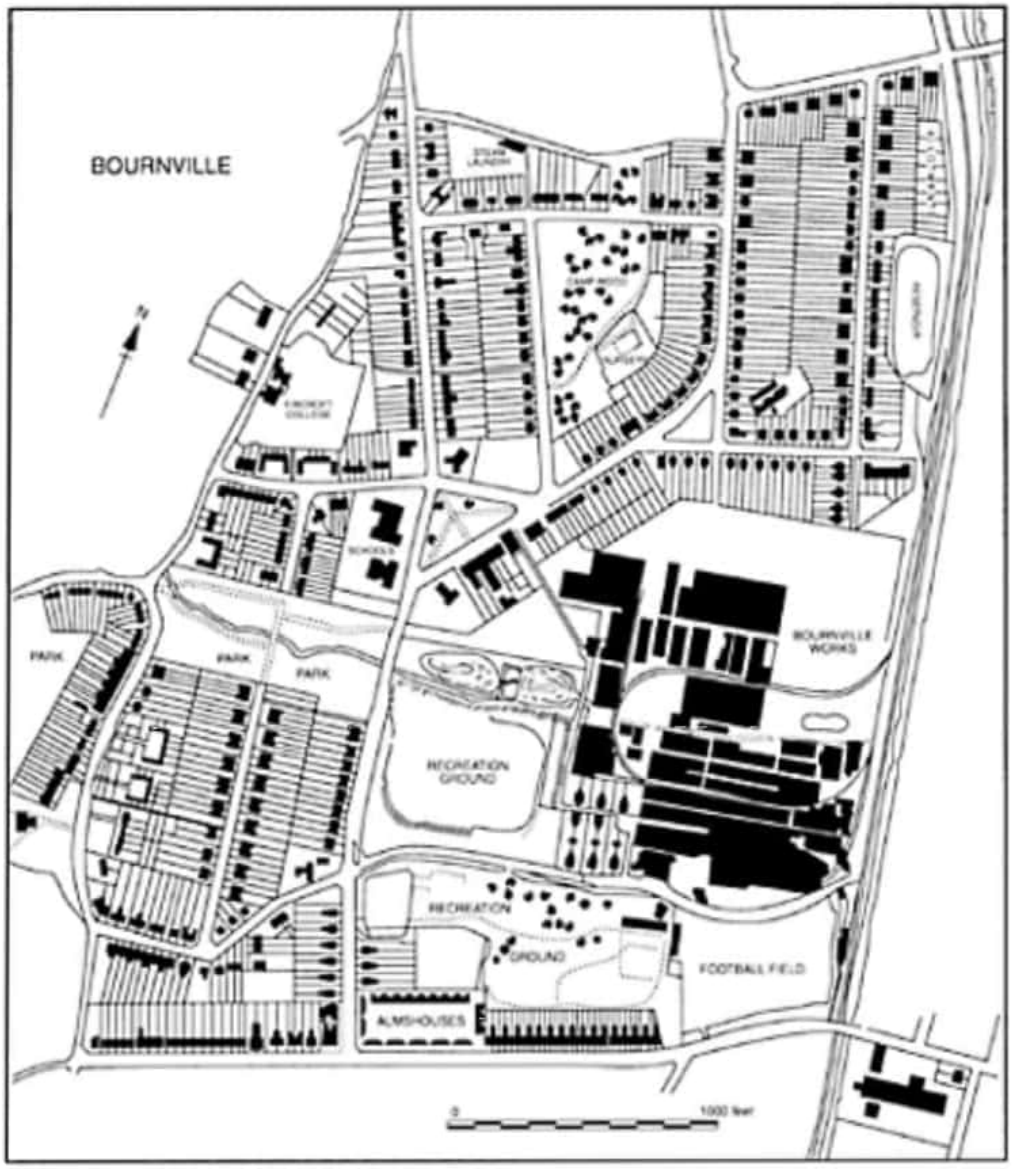

Figure 8.1 Plan of the model settlement of Bournville

Source: S.Ward (1994) *Planning and Urban Change* London: Chapman

Scanned with CamScanner

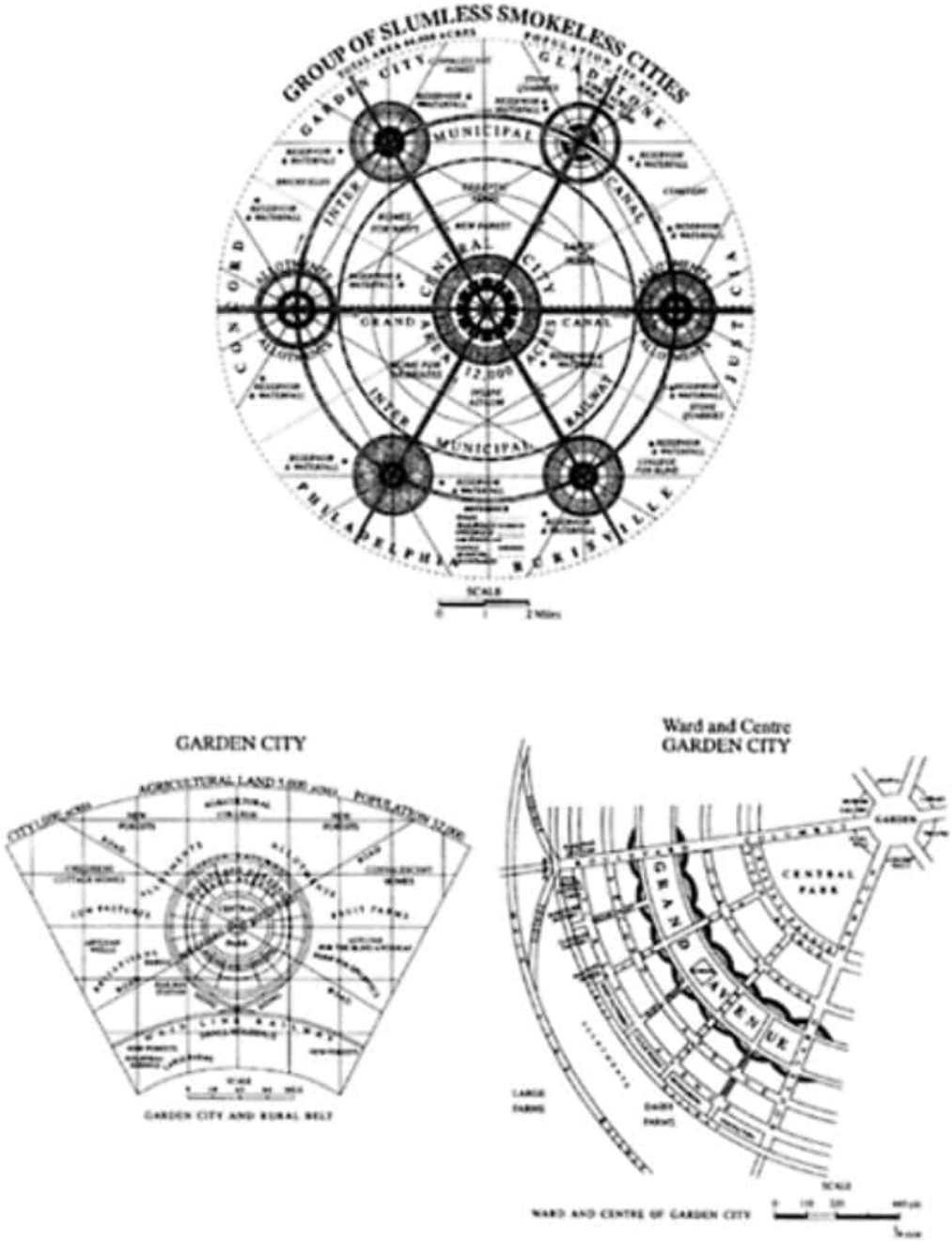

Figure 8.2 Structure of Howard's garden city

Olmstead, Davis and Vaux designed residential areas as 'cities in a garden', which led to the building of Riverside IL, Llewellyn Park NJ and Brookline MA as America's first planned 'romantic suburbs'. More generally, the City Beautiful movement, which emerged following the Chicago World Columbia Exposition of 1893, argued for the planned unity of the city as a work of art supported by a master plan for land use and by comprehensive zoning ordinances to maintain that plan. By 1913 over forty cities had prepared master plans, and more than 200 were engaged in some form of major civic improvement.[12] In 1917 a new professional organisation, the American City Planning

Scanned with CamScanner

Institute, was established.[13] In practice, however, the forces of privatisation were too strong to be contained by public officials, and 'urban planners seldom did more than follow residential and commercial developers with transportation and sewerage systems'.[14] The strength of private enterprise within the US political economy has been a major force in shaping the form of US planning and the structure of American urban areas.

WESTERN EUROPE

In parallel with the development of Utopian idealism in Britain, equally ambitious alternative urban forms were being advanced in Europe in the ideas of the Italian Futurist movement, launched in a manifesto by Marinetti in 1909. The concept of a new, comprehensively planned city was a key idea in futuristic urban designs, which included high-rise building, elevated roadways, land-use segregation and the use of mass-production techniques and new materials such as glass and concrete. The Swiss architect Charles Jeanneret (Le Corbusier)[15] proposed a city for 3 million people based on four main principles:

1. As a result of increasing size and central area congestion the traditional form of city had become obsolete.
2. Pressure on the central business district could be reduced by spreading the density of development more evenly.
3. Congestion could be alleviated by building at higher density (1,000 persons to the net residential acre, or about 2,500 to the hectare) at local points, with a high proportion (95 per cent) of intervening open space.
4. An efficient urban transportation system incorporating railway lines and segregated elevated motorways would link all parts of the city.

Although his plans were not implemented in their entirety, Le Corbusier's ideas exerted a profound effect on urban planning and the form of cities. The concept of high-rise, high-density building was translated into practice in most large cities during the 1950s and 1960s, although in many instances less attention was given to the quality of space surrounding the tower blocks.

Notwithstanding differing national circumstances, we can identify three broad phases of urban planning in Western Europe:

1. In the immediate aftermath of the Second World War the focus of attention was on reconstruction and satisfying the backlog of housing and basic infrastructure.
2. By the late 1950s, increasing affluence and the growth of centralised planning systems led to comprehensive slum clearance, city-centre redevelopment schemes, and the construction of urban motorways and large-scale public housing projects.
3. From the late 1970s, growing awareness of the social disruption caused by the large-scale remodelling of cities led to greater attention to public participation in planning, and the replacement of redevelopment by rehabilitation.

A significant ongoing problem for all large European cities is that of growth management. Here the experience of the multicentred metropolitan region of Randstad may offer lessons for polycentric urban regions elsewhere (Box 8.3).

Scanned with CamScanner

POST-WAR URBAN PLANNING IN THE UK

Although urban planning in the UK was inspired by reformist reactions to the nineteenth-century city, its cause was advanced in the 1930s by the growing focus on the distribution of population, and associated land-use issues. The increasing concentration of population in an axial belt stretching from London to Merseyside, high unemployment levels outside this zone, and the threat of urban

BOX 8.3

Urban growth management: the Dutch approach

The Netherlands is a small country with a population density of over 1,030 persons per square mile (400 per square kilometre). The Randstad city-region contains 36 per cent of the national population on 5 per cent of the land area and incorporates the three large cities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague as well as a number of smaller urban centres. Pressure on open space is considerable.

Dutch planners seek to maintain the green heart of Randstad by directing growth outwards towards the peripheral regions and, within the urban region, by encouraging higher-density development in rehabilitated inner-city areas. Strong planning controls to protect the centre of Randstad are supported by large-scale public ownership of urban land, with 70 per cent of Amsterdam owned by the city authority. The fact that the polycentric structure of Randstad is functional as well as physical, with different cities specialising in broadly different functions (e.g. heavy industry in Rotterdam, finance in Amsterdam and government in The Hague), also reduces journey times and traffic congestion. Continued planned regulation of urban growth will be needed to prevent the coalescence of individual urban areas in Randstad and enable the 'green-heart metropolis' to maintain its open structure.

sprawl induced governmental concern. A number of reports on these and other issues (Table 8.3) contributed to the passage of the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act, which established the structure of modern urban planning in the UK.[16]

The basic principle enshrined in the 1947 Actis that of private ownership of land but public accountability in its use so that landowners seeking to undertake development first had to obtain permission from the local planning authority. The local authority was also given the power to acquire land for public works by compulsory purchase on payment of compensation to the landowner. Local planning authorities were required to prepare and submit quinquennial development plans to the Ministry of Town and Country Planning indicating how land in their area was to be used. A second principle embodied in the 1947 Act was that of community gain, rather than individual gain, from land **betterment**. This meant that when land was developed, the increase in its value that resulted from the granting of planning permission was reserved for the community by the imposition of a 100 per cent land-development tax. Political opposition ensured that this provision was removed in 1952. Today, compulsory exaction of betterment values from land developers has been replaced by a system of negotiated agreements over **planning gain,** which represents the benefits that a local authority may require of a developer as a condition

Scanned with CamScanner

TABLE 8.3 MAJOR REPORTS AND LEGISLATION LEADING TO THE 1947 PLANNING SYSTEM IN THE UK

Date	*Report or new legislation*
1940	Report of the Royal Commission on the Distribution of the Industrial Population (Barlow Report, Cmd 6153)
1942	Report of the Expert Committee on Compensation and Betterment (Uthwatt Report, Cmd 6386)
1942	Report of the Committee on Land Utilisation in Rural Areas (Scott Report, Cmd 6378)
1943	Ministry of Town and Country Planning Act
1943	Town and Country Planning (Interim Development) Act
1944	Town and Country Planning Act
1945	Distribution of Industry Act:
1945	Abercrombie's Greater London Development Plan
1946	New Towns Act
1947	Town and Country Planning Act

for planning permission.[17] We can note the similarity, in principle, with the mechanism of incentive zoning in the USA (Box 8.4).

The primary objectives of the 1947 planning system at the city-region scale were urban containment, protection of the countryside and the creation of self-contained balanced communities (e.g. New Towns). These goals were advanced by local authorities using the development plan and development control process, and by central government through the New Towns programme, supplemented by the Expanding Towns scheme (which enabled cities with problems of overcrowding to arrange overspill schemes with other local authorities (see Chapter 9)).

The first major changes to the 1947 planning system were contained in the 1968 Town and Country Planning Act. This sought to introduce greater responsiveness and flexibility to the plan-making process. The single development plan with its specific land-use focus and five-year life expectancy was replaced by a two-tier system of structure plans and local plans. Structure plans are comprehensive strategic statements designed to translate national and regional economic and social policies into the specific areal context of the local authority. Local plans apply the structure-plan strategy to particular areas and issues, and make detailed provision for development control.[18]

Most commentators would agree that the 1947 planning system has achieved its objectives: post-war suburban growth has been contained to the extent that coalescence of adjacent cities has been prevented and good-quality agricultural land protected. The

Scanned with CamScanner

major mechanism of green belts around the large cities has prevented peripheral sprawl, although they have contributed to inflation in land and housing prices in existing

BOX 8.4

Incentive zoning in Seattle

Incentive zoning offers bonuses to developers in return for the provision of public benefits. The Washington Mutual Tower gained twenty-eight of its fifty-five storeys as a result of amenities offered by the developer.

In addition to the twenty-seven storeys allowed as of right, the developer gained thirteen storeys for a $2.5 million housing donation and between one and two and a half storeys for various other public benefits.

settlements within the green belt and provoked an ongoing conflict between developers and planners over the availability of land for housing[19] (Box 8.5). Also, the green belt has been powerless in the face of increases in transport technology and in the length of acceptable commuting journey, which have seen some residential development leapfrog into settlements beyond the green belt. But, in general, the UK planning system has prevented the kind of scattered urban development in evidence around cities in North America.

Scanned with CamScanner

URBAN POLICY IN THE UK

Urban planning takes place within the framework of national urban policy, the priorities of which reflect the ideology of the state. We can identify four major phases in British post-war urban policy (Table 8.4):

1. physical redevelopment;
2. social welfare;
3. entrepreneurial;
4. competitive.

THE PHYSICAL REDEVELOPMENT PHASE

From the end of the Second World War until the late 1960s urban problems were seen largely in physical terms. The policy response to issues of housing quality and supply, transport, and industrial restructuring focused on slum clearance and comprehensive redevelopment strategies, and the planned decentralisation of urban population via regional policy and New Town development.

BOX 8.5

Land-use conflict in the green belt

Various agents and interests are involved in determining whether a parcel of land is transferred from rural to urban use (see diagram). In the UK,

where a nationally co-ordinated planning system attempts to effect an equitable balance between private profit and public interest, conflict between developers and planners over land for new housing is a key factor determining the character of the green belt. The debate over land availability has intensified since the early 1970s, with, in general, builder-developers arguing that the planning system restricts their ability to obtain a basic factor of production and that development controls inflate the price of land and therefore of houses. The purpose of the planning system, on the other hand, is to ensure the orderly release of building sites within an approved policy framework.

The commuter village of Torrance in the green belt to the north of Glasgow is a typical location for the ongoing battle between house-builders and planners around Britain's cities.[20] The issues are complex: in seeking permission to build houses on

Scanned with CamScanner

the disputed (Tower Farm) site the developers cited a number of arguments, including the need to satisfy demand for housing in attractive locations, and their willingness to provide, via 'planning gain', additional infrastructure and community facilities. The planners argued that demand for new housing could be accommodated on brownfield sites outwith the green belt, and that the local authority would have to meet the ongoing running costs of any facilities.

Failure to resolve the dispute at a local level resulted in a public inquiry that concluded in favour of the planning authority. The developers exercised their right of **appeal** to the Secretary of State. Their appeal was dismissed. Thus, in the case of the Tower Farm site, the land remained part of the green belt. However, while the battle of Tower Farm may be over, both developers and planners live to fight another day in a continuing struggle between private profit and public interest in the production of the built environment.

Source: **M.Pacione (1990) Private profit and public interest in the residential development process** ***Journal of Rural Studies*** **6(2), 103–16**

THE SOCIAL-WELFARE PHASE

In the early 1970s empirical research highlighted the incidence of poverty within Britain's cities as the long post-war boom faltered (see Chapter 15). Emphasis was placed on supplementing existing social programmes to improve the welfare of disadvantaged individuals and communities. Influenced by US initiatives, such as the Head Start project developed as part of the Model Cities programme, a range of area-based experimental schemes were introduced during the 1970s. These 'Urban Programme' initiatives, which included educational priority areas and community development projects,[21] operated from a 'culture of poverty' perspective (under which poverty is held to be self-reproducing) and aimed to give deprived communities the capacity to solve their own problems. The widespread increase in unemployment in the mid-1970s, in the wake of the Arab oil embargo and world recession, made it clear, however, that the scale of urban deprivation could not simply be the result of the inadequacies of the poor. An alternative 'structural' explanation of poverty was enshrined in the final report of the Community Development Project. This rejected a social pathological view of deprivation in the conclusion that 'there might certainly be in those areas a higher proportion of the sick and the elderly for whom a better co- ordination of services would undoubtedly be helpful, but the vast

Scanned with CamScanner

TABLE 8.4 MAIN PHASES IN BRITISH POST-WAR URBAN POLICY

Physical redevelopment, 1945–69	*Area-based social welfare projects (the inner-city problem), 1969–79*	*Entrepreneuralism, 1979–91*	*Competitive policy, 1991–7*
Representational regime			
Construction of corporatist consensus around reconstruction programme. Central-local government partnership in council-housing redevelopment programme. Close links with construction industry (system-build, high-density, high-rise)	Area-based projects run by local government gave way in 1978 to 'partnerships' involving central government and designated local authorities, other statutory bodies (such as area health authorities), and local voluntary organisations and local industry (but not labour organisations). 'Programme areas' also designated. Local government seen as the natural agent of regeneration. Local government dominated by urban managerialism	Greater emphasis placed on the role of the private sector in urban policy (privatism). Creation of business elites and growth coalitions. 'Privatised' partnerships and business representation on a range of national and local institutions	Patterns of interest representation shifted, requiring new patterns of local leadership with private sector, community representatives and voluntary sector organisations, alongside city councillors in boards and companies at arm's length from the local authority, Consolidation of trends towards urban governance to prevent municipalisation of policy
Internal structures of the state			
Monolithic state characterised by corporate planning, bureaucratic paternalism, functionalism, uniformity and inflexibility. Constructive partnership between central and local	Home Office and the newly created Department of the Environment were key departments during this period. Urban Deprivation Unit created in the Home Office. Some attempt to co-ordinate policy	Centralisation of power. Shift in local government towards urban governance with private sector having greater role. Confrontation approach to local government (rate capping, cutbacks, abolition, and quangos bypassing local authorities). Urban entrepreneuralism	Purported 'new localism' developed through the establishment of integrated government offices for the regions and the Challenge Fund. Cabinet committee established to oversee Challenge Fund. In reality

Scanned with CamScanner

government. Department of Economic Affairs created (1964) together with a set of official regions and regional planning councils and regional planning boards	across a number of areas but thwarted by inter-department rivalry. Attempts to adopt corporate working and the bending of main programmes to address the urban problem. Co-operation between central and local government.	promoted involving leaner and flatter managerial structures, generic roles, team working and flexibility	'remote control' exercised via the contract culture, Central-local government relations characterised by an 'authoritarian decentralism' or 'centralist localism'. Local partnerships involved in a process of centrally controlled local regulatory undercutting. New public management (to promote, privatisation and; competition) creating the; enabling authority;
Patterns of state intervention			
The long post-war boom period was dominated by policies to achieve national unity through regional balance, containment of urban growth and the reconstruction of urban areas, involving slum clearance and comprehensive redevelopment. Instruments included establishment of the development-plan system, New Towns, industrial development certificates, office development permits and Plan published in 1965 advocating 'growth through planning'	Area-based experimental social-welfare projects attempting to respond to economic, social and environmental problems resulting from structural decline of the economy. Inner-cities policy, e.g.: ■ Urban Programme 1969 ■ General Improvement Areas, 1969 ■ Educational Priority Areas ■ Community Development Projects, 1969 ■ Inner Area Studies ■ Housing Action Areas, 1974 ■ Comprehensive Community Programmes, 1974 ■ Enhanced Urban Programme, 1978 Inner Urban Areas Act	Neo-liberal philosophy pursued involving deregulation, liberalisation and privatisation. Social needs subordinated to the needs of business. Emphasis given to property-led initiatives and the creation of an entrepreneurial culture, e.g.: ■ Enterprise Zones, 1979 ■ Urban Development Corporations, 1979 ■ Urban Development Grants, 1982 ■ Derelict Land Grant, 1983 ■ City Action Teams, 1985 ■ Estate Action, 1985 ■ Urban Regeneration Grants, 1987 ■ City Grant, 1988	Competition for funds and competitiveness of business and localities the leading priorities for regeneration policy. Initiatives to improve the competitive advantage of localities, e.g.: ■ City Challenge, 1991 ■ Urban Partnership, 1993 ■ City Pride, 1993 ■ Single Regeneration Budget, 1994 ■ Rural Challenge, 1994 ■ Regional Challenge, 1994 ■ Capital Challenge, 1996 ■ Local Challenge, 1996 ■ SectorChallenge, 1996

Scanned with CamScanner

	(1978) acknowledged the economic nature of the urban crisis. Keynesian demand-management techniques used to counter the emerging crisis ('stagflation') of the 1970s

Source: **N.Oatley (1998)** ***Cities, Economic Competition and Urban Policy*** **London: Chapman**

majority were ordinary, working-class men and women who, through forces outside their control, happened to be living in areas where bad housing conditions, redundancies, layoffs and low wages were commonplace'[22] (Community Development Project 1977 p. 4).

It followed that to tackle the root causes of urban decline would require more than marginal adjustments of existing social policies. This was acknowledged by the 1977 White Paper on policy for the inner cities, which signalled a more broadly based approach to urban problems, combining economic, social and environmental programmes and involving new partnership arrangements between central and local government to provide a more coordinated response. The emphasis on improving the economic environment of cities was promoted in several ways, including a shift of attention from New Towns to urban regeneration and increased powers to enable local authorities to aid and attract industrial developments. The major vehicle for these measures was the expanded Urban Programme.[23] In practice, however, a concerted attack on the urban problem was undermined by the prerogatives of national economic policy, which led to reductions in local-authority finance. The Conservative government elected in 1979 continued the concept of partnership but stressed the involvement of the private sector.

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL PHASE

The advent of the Thatcher government in 1979 'witnessed the fracture of three main pillars upon which post-Second World War social democratic politics was constructed—Fordism, welfarism and Keynesianism'[24] (Gafficken and Warf 1993 p. 71). The reorientation of urban policy by the New Right Conservative government was part of a wider agenda to restructure Britain economically, socially, spatially and ideologically around a new consensus of free-market individualism and unequivocal rejection of the social-democratic consensus of the post-war Keynesian **welfare state**. As Martin (1988 p. 221) observed, the thrust of state policy shifted from welfare to enterprise:

> the aim has been to reverse the post-war drift towards collectivism and creeping corporatism, to redefine the role and extent of state intervention in the economy, to curb the power of organised labour, and to release the natural, self-generative power of competitive market forces in order to revive private capitalism, economic growth and accumulation.[25]

Scanned with CamScanner

The Keynesian commitment to the macro-economic goal of full employment was replaced by the objective of controlling inflation by means of restrictive monetary measures, and supply-side flexibilisation. From its inception Thatcherism' was a doctrine for modernising Britain's economy by exposing its industries, its cities and its people to the rigours of international competition in the belief that this would promote the shift of resources out of inefficient 'lame duck' traditional industries and processes into new, more flexible and competitive high-technology sectors, production methods and work practices.[26] The principal mechanisms for achieving this transformation centred on tax cuts and deficit spending, deregulation and privatisation, all of which had geographically uneven impacts. At the urban level these three macro-economic strategies were combined most strikingly in the concepts of the enterprise zone (EZ) and the urban development corporation (UDC) (see Chapter 16).

As part of the broad political and economic agenda, urban policy was also used to restructure central government-local government relations. Five processes characterised the changes:

1. displacement involving the transfer of powers to non-elected agencies (e.g. UDCs), thereby bypassing the perceived bureaucracy and obstructiveness of local authorities;
2. deregulation involving a reduction in local authorities' planning controls to encourage property-led regeneration (e.g. in EZs);
3. the encouragement of bilateral partnerships between central government and the private sector;
4. privatisation, incorporating the **contracting out** of selected local government services, housing tenure diversification and provision for schools to 'opt out' of local education authority control;
5. centralisation of powers through a range of quangos[27] (quasi non-governmental organisations).

THE COMPETITIVE PHASE

By the early 1990s it was evident that the approach to urban policy pursued since 1979 had failed to reverse urban decline. The limitations of a property-based approach to regeneration had been exposed by a slump in the demand for property in the recession of 1989–91. As Turok (1992 p. 376) observed, although property development has potentially important economic consequences, it is 'no panacea for economic regeneration and is deficient as the main focus of urban policy'.[28] Property development lacks the scope, powers and resources to provide the holistic approach required to tackle urban decline. Its limited perspective and goals are unable to guarantee a rise in overall economic activity in a locality and ignore important 'human issues' such as affordable housing, education and training, social exclusion and investment in basic infrastructure.

Scanned with CamScanner

Plate 8.1 The Canary Wharf tower in London symbolises the changing economic structure of the former docklands

The government's response was to reconstruct urban policy around the 'initial catalyst' of competition. This era of competitive urban policy was heralded by the City Challenge initiative, which introduced competitive bidding among local authorities for urban regeneration funds.[29] Successful schemes are managed by a multi-agency partnership involving the local authority along with the private, voluntary and community sectors. While local authorities appeared to have a greater role under this arrangement, in practice local autonomy is constrained by the underlying entrepreneurial ethos of the

Scanned with CamScanner

partnership organisations and by the need for successful bids to conform to central government guidelines.

THE 'THIRD WAY'

We can add a fifth phase to this chronology of British urban policy commencing in 1997 with the election of New Labour. This marked a move away from the neo-liberal era of policy under the Conservatives towards a situation in which greater attention is paid to the social consequences of economic policy. In policy terms the key priorities include strengthening local and regional economies, increasing economic opportunities for deprived areas, rebuilding neighbourhoods and promoting **sustainable development**. Pursuit of these goals is based on three key principles:

1. A strategic approach is to be taken which involves the integration of national policies and programmes with EU, regional and local initiatives to ensure a comprehensive attack on the multifaceted problems of social disadvantage.
2. Local authorities are to be given a stronger role in urban regeneration.
3. The 'sweat equity' of local people will be encouraged to promote community economic development.

Specifically, New Labour's approach to urban policy is based on CORA:

1. *Community* involvement, with greater public participation;
2. *Opportunity* to work or to obtain training and education;
3. *Responsibility* in the obligation of citizens who can work to do so;
4. *Accountability* of governments to their publics.

We discuss the particular policies and outcomes of this Third Way in relation to urban regeneration in Chapter 16.

URBAN PLANNING IN THE USA

Although urban planning in the USA shares the same reformist roots as in the UK, its evolution and contemporary structure are very different. By contrast with the situation in Britain, there is no national system of planning in the sense of a common framework with a clearly defined set of physical, social and economic objectives. Planning is not obligatory, and together with the fragmented structure of local government in addition to the federal government and fifty states, there are about 8,000 counties, 18,000 municipalities and 17,000 townships each with the power to plan or regulate land use, i.e. an average of 760 per state[30] this means that the content of planning is both local and variable from place to place. In principle a range of techniques for controlling urban growth and land use are available, but in practice the major tool employed is land-use zoning. Specific urban problems, such as the provision of low-income housing, are addressed through federal policy.

The first comprehensive zoning ordinance was passed in New York in 1916. The judgement of the US Supreme Court in 1926 that zoning did not infringe the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution (which protects against property being taken without due

Scanned with CamScanner

process of law) led to widespread adoption of the technique. Under this procedure, the effective control of land use was transferred from the state to the municipalities and townships, which were thereafter permitted to limit the types of development on land within their boundaries,[31] including control over the height, bulk and area of buildings constructed after the enactment of zoning regulations. The purposes of such controls were to minimise problems of congestion, fire hazard, shading by high buildings; to control population density; to ensure the provision of urban services; and to promote the general welfare of the public. In practice there are many forms of zoning[32] (Box 8.6). This variety, and the underlying presumption in favour of development, means that controls over market-induced physical growth and change are much weaker in the USA than in the UK.

Critics of zoning maintain that:

1. It is unnecessary, since market forces will produce a fair segregation of land uses.
2. It is open to corruption, particularly in respect of variances (permitted modifications or adjustments to the zoning regulations).
3. It can lead to premature use of land resources by owners who fear an unfavourable zoning change (down-zoning).
4. It is unequal in its effect, since a piece of property zoned for commercial use provides its owner with windfall profits at the expense of neighbours who must bear the costs of increased traffic noise and congestion.

The most vociferous criticism is reserved for the practice of **exclusionary zoning**. This refers to the adoption by suburban municipalities of legal regulations designed to preserve their jurisdiction against intrusion of less desired land uses. Regulations requiring large lots, excessive floor space, three or more bedrooms, or excluding multiple-unit dwellings, high-density development or mobile homes, all serve to maintain high-cost housing and effectively exclude lower-income population.

Supporters of zoning argue that it is a flexible tool and an effective means of allowing local residents to determine part of the character of their neighbourhood. Certainly its wholesale use during much of the twentieth century has helped to determine the land-use structure of metropolitan America.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT IN THE USA

A wide range of growth management strategies has been employed by cities and states in an attempt to moderate the negative effects of urban sprawl[33]

BOX 8.6

Common forms of land-use zoning in the USA

Zoning is the division of an area into zones within which uses are permitted as set out in the zoning ordinance. If, however, owing to special circumstances, literal enforcement of the ordinance will result in unnecessary hardship for the landowner, the board of adjustment is empowered to issue a variance or relaxation of zoning conditions. The zoning system is, therefore, characterised by a number of forms of zoning, including:

Scanned with CamScanner

1. *Cluster zoning and planned unit development.* This involves the clustering of development on part of a site, leaving the remainder for open space, recreation, amenity or preservation. The planned unit development is an extension of cluster zoning in which developers are given freedom to design developments to meet market demand but within a negotiated set of criteria relating to pollution, traffic congestion, etc.
2. *Special district zoning.* This is designed to maintain the special land-use character of a place, such as the Special Garment Center District in New York City, designated to deflect market forces and maintain the garment industry against pressure to convert manufacturing space into offices and apartments.
3. *Downzoning.* Downzoning is the rezoning of an area to a lower density use and is often the result of neighbourhood pressure to avoid the development of intrusive land use. Since downzoning is likely to reduce the value of undeveloped land, it is likely to be objected to by the landowners.
4. *Large lot zoning.* This has the ostensible purpose of safeguarding public welfare by ensuring that there is good access for emergency-service vehicles, roads are not too congested and there is ample open space. It can also be employed to exclude undesirable residential development and maintain the social exclusivity of a neighbourhood.
5. *Incentive zoning.* This is basically a means of obtaining private-sector provision of public amenities by offering zoning bonuses in return for private finance of specific infrastructure. It is similar in principle to the UK concept of 'planning gain'.

(Table 8.5). Many of the techniques in use seek to link residential development to infrastructure provision. The town of Ramapo NY, 35 miles from downtown Manhattan, introduced a timed growth plan in the late 1960s to ensure that residential development proceeded in phase with provision of municipal services. To this end, developers were required to obtain a permit for suburban residential development. Where the required municipal services were available the permit was granted but elsewhere development could not proceed until the programmed services had reached the location or were provided by the developer. The town of Petaluma CA, 40 miles north of San Francisco, introduced, in 1972, an annual development quota of 500 dwellings. Applications to build were assessed against criteria that included access to existing services with spare capacity, design quality, open-space provision, the inclusion of low-cost housing and the provision of public services. The city of Napa CA introduced an urban-limit line intended to cap the population at 75,000 by the year 2000. Beyond the boundary essential public services would not be provided (the actual population in 2000 was 72,585). Several Californian cities, including San Diego and San José, have passed laws requiring voter approval for proposed developments. While 'voter requirements' have not prevented new development in the long run, they have affected the power balance between 'pro-growth' developers and 'slow growth' community interest groups, and have provided current residents with some compensation for the negative aspects of growth.[34]

In contrast to the UK, where a national planning system governs land development, restricting an individual's right to develop their land is a politically contentious issue in the USA. This difficulty has been overcome by separating the development value of the

Scanned with CamScanner

land from its existing use value and permitting the transfer of development value to another site. Under this system of transfer of development rights (TDR) owners of land can sell their development rights to developers in designated receiving areas in which they are permitted to build at an increased density that reflects the value of the transferred rights. While this mechanism has been employed in several areas, such as Montgomery County in Maryland, overall relatively few TDR programmes have been initiated.

TABLE 8.5 MAIN AD VANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF SELECTED GROWTH MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

Technique	*Purpose*	*Advantages*	*Disadvantages*
Urban growth boundaries	To set a limit on the extension of urban services	Encourage more compact and cheaper to service development. Limit sprawl	Need for restrictive zoning outside boundaries, and policies on phased growth within boundaries. Can be changed like zoning. If boundaries are too tight can raise cost of land
Concurrency or adequate facilities policies	To ensure that adequate infrastructure is in place before a development is built. To create phased development	Slow the pace of development. Minimise leapfrog patterns. Put more of infrastructure cost on the developer	Developers may fear they will lead to a moratorium on infrastructure and delay their projects
Growth-rate caps	To set a limit on the percentage rate of annual growth	Promote phased/fiscally affordable development	Can raise the cost of land and housing. Difficult to monitor
Transfer of development rights	To transfer development potential from protected lands to designated growth areas	Private developers pay the costs. Concentrates growth	Difficult to agree on sending and receiving areas
Impact fees	One-time payments from a developer to cover the cost of new services for new development	Place more of servicing costs on to developer	Raise cost of development. Setting fees is an imprecise process

SMART GROWTH

The smart thing about the **smart-growth** movement that emerged in the USA in the mid-1990s is that while advocates share many of the goals of previous anti-sprawl efforts their language and methods are more pragmatic and inclusive. Rather than appealing narrowly to environmental sensibilities the focus is on broader quality-of-life issues based on a more comprehensive view of the urban development process.[35] Many of the principles of

Scanned with CamScanner

smart growth (Box 8.7) overlap with those of new **urbanism** (see Chapter 9). Smart growth is concerned to protect land from (premature) development and promote development in desired directions. In 1997 the state of Maryland passed the Neighbourhood Conservation and Smart Growth Act in an effort to curb urban sprawl, encourage investment within growth centres, and protect countryside. The Act required counties and incorporated towns and cities to identify growth boundaries. Within these 'priority funding areas' state funds are available for infrastructure development; development outside the growth areas must be funded by the counties or the private

BOX 8.7

Major principles of smart growth

1. Mix land uses.
2. Take advantage of compact building design.
3. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
4. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
5. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas.
6. Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.
7. Provide a variety of transport choices.
8. Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost-effective.
9. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.

developers. State office buildings, economic development funds, housing loans and industrial development financing are targeted within growth areas. The smart-growth policy does not prohibit developments outside priority funding areas and major developers that do not require public sector infrastructure investment can proceed unimpeded. But, more generally, state infrastructure dollars can help curb sprawl by influencing the location and amount of urban development. A key challenge for smart-growth strategies is to achieve acceptability across the diverse groups with an interest in urban development. As Cullingworth and Caves (2003 p. 186) acknowledged, 'without the necessary cooperation the system will not work'.[36]

PLANNING THE SOCIALIST CITY

If market capitalism represents the governing philosophy for urban growth and change in the USA, the other extreme of the ideological spectrum is represented by urban planning in the socialist city.[37] Following the Bolshevik revolution in 1917, debate over the ideal form of the Soviet socialist city was influenced strongly by the doctrines of Marx and Lenin (Box 8.8). The general principles for planning the socialist city were laid out in the 1935 plan for Moscow:

1. *Limited city size.* Reflecting the ideas of Ebenezer Howard, the optimum city size was generally considered to be in the range of 50,000 60,000 (to allow both the economic provision of items of collective consumption and the forging of a community ethos).

Scanned with CamScanner

In the case of Moscow, with a population of 3.5 million, an upper limit of 5 million was envisaged. An internal passport system was introduced in 1932 to control population movements and hence city size.

2. *State control of housing.* Regulations to control the allocation of housing space were considered essential on grounds of equity and public health.
3. *Planned development of residential areas.* This was based on the superblock concept in which all daily facilities would be available within walking distance. Groups of superblock neighbourhoods would constitute a *micro-region* of 8,000–12,000 population which would offer higher-order services.
4. *Spatial equality in collective consumption.* The distribution of consumer and cultural services was to be based on the general principle of equal accessibility.

BOX 8.8

Marxist-Leninist principles underlying the Soviet socialist city

The application of Marxist-Leninist principles differentiated the Soviet socialist city from its Western counterpart in the following ways:

1. nationalisation of all resources (including land);
2. planned rather than market-determined land use;
3. the substitution of collectivism for privatism, most apparent in terms of the absence of residential segregation, the dominant role of public transport, and the conscious limitation and dispersal of retail functions;
4. planned industrialisation as the major factor in city growth;
5. the perceived role of the city as the agent of directed social and economic change in backward and frontier regions alike;
6. cradle-to-grave security in return for some restrictions on personal choice of place of residence and freedom to migrate;
7. directed urbanisation and the planned development of cities according to principles of equality and hygiene rather than ability to pay.

Source: **J.Bater (1980)** ***The Soviet City*** **London: Arnold**

5. *Limited journey to work.* Norms were established to govern the time spent travelling to work (in large cities a forty-minute trip was deemed a maximum), and public transport was to be the dominant mode.
6. *Stringent land-use zoning.* To reduce journeys to work, housing and employment foci could not be too far apart, but as industry was to be a major urban employer, strict zoning and the use of green buffers were essential to separate residential areas from noxious industry.
7. *Rationalised traffic flows.* Heavy traffic flows in cities were to be handled by designated streets to minimise pollution externalities and congestion.
8. *Extensive green space.* Parks and green belts were an integral part of urban design, with public ownership of all land facilitating its conversion to open space.
9. *Symbolism and the central city.* The city centre was to be the symbolic heart of the city and locus for public demonstrations. This role was emphasised by grand architecture and the decentralisation of administrative and distributive services.

Scanned with CamScanner

10. *Town planning as an integral part of national planning.* Urban planning was subservient to national economic planning.

The overriding dominance of industry and its controlling ministries largely frustrated the ideals of Soviet socialist urban planning. By the death of Stalin in 1953, the urban situation in the Soviet Union could be compared with Pittsburgh or Sheffield in the mid-nineteenth century. As French (1995) observed, 'heavy industry dominated and polluted, living conditions were appalling, the workers had inadequate rationed access to food and all daily requirements'.[38] During the post-Stalin era, priority in urban planning was necessarily given to housing construction, and the fringes of most cities were built up with micro-regions of apartment blocks in which the planned norms of service provision were achieved rarely, or reached only years after the housing was occupied (Box 8.9). In the latter days of the Soviet system, and with the introduction of Gorbachev's *perestroika* programme, the mechanisms of urban planning changed, to enable public participation and to incorporate social planning into purely physical planning for cities. Reality replaced the idealism of the founders of Soviet socialism. The goal of a truly socialist city was never achieved.[39]

SOCIALIST URBAN FORM

Urban form evolves in response to complex inter-actions among public and private forces. As we have seen, in socialist cities planned investment and state regulations were the defining instruments that created distinctive patterns of land use. The spatial character of the (formerly) socialist cities typically exhibited a relatively high density of residential settlement in the urban core; an adjacent band of low-density settlement where industry was located, often in large and polluting factories that would have been considered unacceptable urban investments in Western societies; and a swath of increasing residential density at the periphery, commonly in high-rise apartment blocks built to a standard design. Figure 8.3 portrays this archetypical rising

BOX 8.9

The Soviet micro-region

The micro-region was the basic spatial unit of planning in the Soviet socialist city. Comprising a number of apartment blocks *(kvartaly)* the micro-region of population 5,000–12,000 was designed to provide basic services for residents. Theoretically, any flat in a micro-region should be within 100–300m (90–270 yards) of the nearest shops with 80 per cent of the population not over 1,000m (0.6 mile) away. As French (1995) describes, in reality the vast majority of micro-regions do not meet the norms of service provision as a result of the pressing need to provide housing. Where shops have been provided, they are not in readily accessible precincts but scattered through the micro-region on the ground floors of the apartment blocks, thereby entailing much time and effort in shopping. In particular, any given micro-region is unlikely to have the full range of shops selling daily and weekly necessities. Thus, journeys to neighbouring micro-regions are often necessary.

Scanned with CamScanner

At a higher level in the urban structure, plans group several micro-regions to form a living region' *(zhiloy rayon)* of 30,000–50,000 people with higher levels of service provision. In the largest cities, such as Moscow, plans envisaged groupings of 'living regions' into a 'town region' *(gorodskoy rayon)* with a major service centre which would obviate the need for journeys to the city centre except on special occasions. The 1971 Moscow Genplan contained eight such 'town regions', one of which was the old central district, the overall city focus. In practice the other seven surrounding 'town regions' failed to develop their foci; indeed, such regional centres have not emerged effectively anywhere as yet.

Source: **R.A.French (1995)** ***Plans, Pragmatism and People*** **London: UCL Press**

density profile or 'camel back' for St Petersburg, where residential density drops off sharply at a radius of only 4 km and then rises consistently to 14 km from the centre. In Budapest residential density also declines at around 4 km from the centre but here the absence of a 'camel back' reflects the local authorities' more liberal policies (compared with the Soviet model) regarding private-housing investment and a lower reliance on high-rise public housing estates. Sofia shows more of a mix of high and

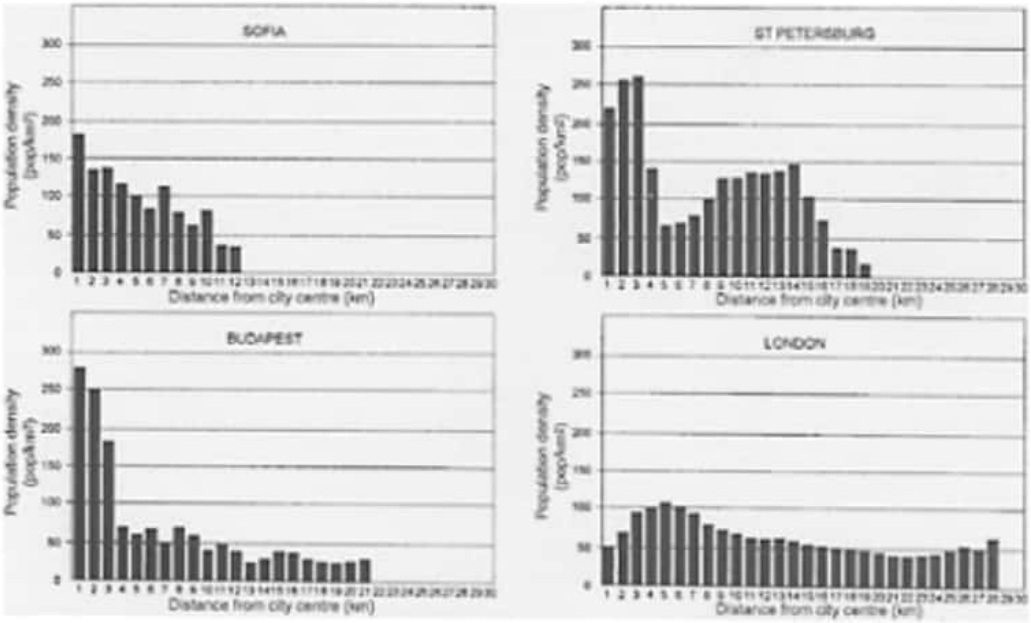

Figure 8.3 Residential density profiles in selected European cities

Scanned with CamScanner

Plate 8.2 High-rise apartment blocks in Moscow are typical of public-housing provision in the socialist city

low densities at all distances from the city centre. By contrast cities in the long-standing market economies, such as London, generally exhibit a smooth and declining density gradient, although the steepness of the drop and extension of relatively high residential densities over considerable distances from the city centre vary as a function of regulation, tax and investment policies affecting the land market.

Under state socialism urban land and housing markets did not exist. Before the transition to capitalism almost all housing was state-owned and city governments restricted residential mobility as a way to tackle housing shortages. People lived in the same place for long periods and neighbourhood change was slow. Planners located stores and services according to the demographic profiles of neighbourhoods and, once located, urban functions remained in place for decades.[40] In Moscow because large-scale housing construction did not begin until the 1960s most working- and middle-class families lived in old downtown buildings in subdivided, overcrowded apartments shared by several extended households (known as 'communal apartments'). Blue-collar workers from outside Moscow who filled the least desirable jobs in exchange for a Moscow residence permit were given vacant rooms in communal apartments whose former residents had moved to new single-family units in high-rise housing projects on the city's periphery. In marked contrast to the capitalist city people from different classes, professions, ages and ethnic groups lived in the same neighbourhood, the same building and even the same communal apartment.[41] When an old building became unliveable all inhabitants were resettled to new housing and the upgraded building was converted to government offices or commercial space. (Thus, between 1960 and 1988 the total supply of housing in central Moscow dropped by 50 per cent.) In general, the better infrastructure, prestige and

Scanned with CamScanner

accessibility offered by a downtown location contributed to the concentration of all types of economic activities there, including manufacturing, services and state offices.

The uneven impact of post-socialist privatisation has reinforced Soviet-era privileging of the city centre in Moscow. With 7 per cent of the urban population in 1997 the central district (CBD) of Moscow employed 25 per cent of city jobs and contained 27 per cent of all institutions and enterprises. Such spatially focused growth stimulated demand for new office and commercial space in the central city which has prompted Moscow city government, like many entrepreneurial cities in the USA, to undertake large-scale redevelopment of the downtown in partnership with private capital.

In the transition period since 1989 privatisation and the replacement of **central planning** with the free market, together with post-industrial restructuring, have catapulted cities such as Moscow from industrial socialism to postindustrial capitalism in a short period. In the post-Soviet city capitalist tendencies such as suburbanisation and counterurbanisation are in evidence, and social differentiation in housing and quality of life is increasingly apparent. In Moscow between 1990 and 1994 the level of private ownership of housing increased from 9.3 per cent to 49.1 per cent. This tenure change and the reintroduction of market mechanisms have been accompanied by increased residential mobility that has enabled some individual citizens to improve their living conditions. As well as suburbanisation, gentrification has appeared in central city redevelopment schemes[42] while, more generally, there is a trend towards a 'European' urban residential structure characterised by an affluent inner core and a poor periphery[43] Nevertheless, while individual choice has been enhanced for those able to participate in the housing market, state planning control of zoning regulations and real-estate taxes (coupled with a limited private mortgage system and declining real incomes for the majority) ensure that, in the short to medium term at least, the social geography of Russian cities will continue to be influenced strongly by local government.

As in the former Soviet Union, in China the declining role of state enterprises in the economy, the introduction of land and housing markets and the opening up of cities to foreign investment have meant that the state and the centrally planned economy have a much reduced influence on urban development. As we have seen (Chapter 5), as a result of the dual effects of internal reforms and globalisation processes, Chinese cities have experienced significant transformation in their sociospatial structure in the reform era. Just as in the post-Soviet city, 'Western' processes of urban sprawl, spatial segregation and social polarisation are being reproduced in Chinese cities. The transition is evident in Beijing, where the creation of a modern CBD is under way, a real-estate market has emerged and the renewal of inner-city slums is in progress. The rapid growth of the urban economy and population has also resulted in peripheral expansion, with the built-up area of the city expanding by almost 50 per cent, from 335 km^2 to 488 km^2 between 1978 and 1998. The introduction of marked social and spatial polarisation in Chinese cities, as well as in other 'transitional societies' such as Vietnam,[44] represents a new problem and challenge for urban authorities.

Scanned with CamScanner

TOWARDS PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Increasingly, urban policy and planning are required to adopt a long-term prospective role. This is particularly so when society, in managing urban change, seeks to strike a balance between economic priorities on the one hand and social and environmental priorities on the other. This issue is central to the question of sustainable urban development.

Economic development is fundamental to human well-being, but growth which fails to recognise the limits of natural resources and the finite capacity of global ecosystems to absorb waste is a basis for long-term decline in the quality of life. Sustainable development aims to meet 'the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.[45] Cities are major agents in depleting the quality of the environment for future generations. They are significant generators of gases, such as carbon dioxide, which cause global warming and of nitrogen oxides and sulphur dioxide, which contribute to acid rain. The greenhouse effect and ozone depletion are consequences of processes of urbanisation and industrialisation which consume raw materials and energy, and produce environmentally damaging waste products.

It is important, however, not to allow the rhetoric of sustainable development to obscure the fact that cities will continue to be net consumers of resources and producers of waste products simply because of the relative intensity of social and economic activity in urban places. Neither should idealism be permitted to cloud the fact that most people will not relinquish voluntarily a cherished lifestyle (such as an urban workplace and rural residence). Furthermore, the goal of sustainability is not an integral element of market capitalism and will encounter opposition from entrenched interests. Most fundamentally, it is unrealistic to expect calls for restraints on economic growth to protect the future environment to be heeded generally in a world where millions of impoverished people face a daily struggle to survive. The importance attached to sustainability in the trade-off between environmental considerations and social, economic and cultural aspirations is clearly a function of general levels of well-being in a society.

Thus the concept of sustainable urban development embraces more than environmental issues, and cannot be achieved merely by imposing pollution taxes or by promoting technical developments to reduce the energy consumption of cars and production processes. Sustainability must also address the key question of people's lifestyle. In essence there are two broad approaches to sustainable urban development:

1. an environmental protection approach with a focus on a municipal programme to reduce the consumption of resources and minimise the environmental impact of development;
2. a holistic approach including an ecological component (stressing the importance of environmentally sound policies), economic aspects (development activities and fiscal issues) and social-equity issues (a fair distribution of resources and the distributional impact of policies).

From this broader perspective the ideal sustainable community is characterised by:

Scanned with CamScanner

1. *environmental integrity:* clean air, soil and water, a variety of species and habitats maintained through practices that ensure long-term sustainability; recognition that the manner in which natural resources are used and the impact of the individual, corporate and societ al actions on the natural processes directly influence the quality of life;
2. *economic vitality:* a broadly based competitive economy responsive to changing circumstances and able to attract new investment and provide employment opportunities in the short and long term;
3. *social well-being:* safety, health, equitable access to housing, community services and recreational activities, with full allowance for cultural and spiritual needs.

The realisation of a sustainable and liveable city requires both an integrated planning and decisionmaking framework and a fundamental shift in traditional values and perspectives. There needs to be a change in focus from curative measures such as pollution reduction to measures based on prevention, from consumption to conservation, and from managing the environment to managing the demands on the environment. This will require change at the individual, community, business and urban levels.

Some tentative steps along this road may be identified in the European Sustainable Cities project, which frames the search for sustainable urban environments as a challenge 'to solve both the problems experienced within cities and the problems caused by cities [while] recognising that cities themselves provide many potential solutions'.[46] At the local government level, Agenda 21 of the 1991 Rio Earth Summit agreed a number of proposals relat ing to waste management, energy conservation, the integration of land-use and transport planning, and the protection of natural habitats. The summit proposed that by 1996 most local authorities should have carried out a consultative process with local residents to develop a Local Agenda 21, including targets and timetables.

In view of the increasing number of people living in urban settlements, strategies designed to substitute sustainable development for unsustainable growth can have a major influence on future urban policy and planning, and on the form and function of cities in the twenty-first century (see Chapter 30). For some analysts, the way towards an improved urban future lies in the creation of new settlements. We examine this theme in the following chapter.

Scanned with CamScanner