Managing Growth on the Rural Urban fringe

Alister Scott BA PhD MRTPI
Planning for Growth: Big Questions

- Demographic change
- Economic growth
- Housing need
- Employment land
- Climate change
- Species decline
- Managing uncertainty
- Conflicting values
- Trade offs
Talk Outline

1. Re-discovering the Rural-Urban Fringe
2. The Growth Agenda
3. Exposing Disintegrated Development Narratives
4. Overcoming Disintegration
   – Conceptual Framework
   – Good Planning Practice
5. Re-inventing Growth on the Fringe
Re-discovering the Rural-Urban Fringe

- Messy space where town & countryside meet
- Arena where growth issues are contested

**DEFINED**
- Land Use (edge)
- Green Belt (barrier)
- Values and Lifestyles (commuter)
- Urban-rural relationships (complex)
Academic Commentary

- Dominant 20C space (OECD 2011)
- Dynamic and productive environments (Spedding 2004)
- Misunderstood space (Gallent 2006)
- A ‘weed’ (Cresswell 1997)
- Battleground for urban and rural uses (Hough 1990)
- Landscape out of order (Qvistrom 2007)
Fragmented Identity

“Many agencies did not have a particular view on the fringe space except when it was part of an actual project.... Although some pieces of work and evidence were commissioned, they only addressed particular features of the fringe landscape” BCU
Re-imagining the Fringe

- Farley and Roberts 2012 p10

“…….complicated unexamined places that thrive on disregard…..”
Economic Growth on the Fringe

- Overall government directive for growth
- Dualism between NIMBY and Pro-growth lobbies
- Barometer of growth impacts
- Benefits of growth
  - Improve Society & Environment
Economic Growth on the Fringe

BUT

- Single basket of growth
- Disintegrated development outcomes........
Narrative 1 Natural vs Built Environment Divide

Natural Environment lens

1. Natural Environment White Paper
2. Habitat and Landscape
3. DEFRA
4. Ecosystem Approach
5. Classifying and Valuing
6. National Ecosystem Assessment
7. Integrated Biodiversity Development Areas
8. Nature Improvement Areas
9. Local Nature Partnerships

Built Environment lens

1. National Planning Policy Framework
2. Local
3. DCLG
4. Spatial Planning
5. Zoning and Ordering
6. Sustainability Assessments
7. Development/Neighbourhood Plans
8. Enterprise Zones / Green Belts
9. Local Enterprise Partnerships
Policy Focus

Natural Environment lens

Built Environment lens
Theory

Natural Environment lens

The Ecosystem Approach

- Economic Prosperity
- Social well-being
- Environmental sustainability

- Equitable sharing
- Integrated approaches
- Conserving biodiversity

SuRCase Project University of Liverpool

Built Environment lens

- Vertical integration
- Horizontal integration

- European
- National
- Regional
- Local
- Individual

- Employment
- Air Quality
- Economic development
- Waste
- Social inclusion
- Accessibility

Eurocities 2004
Government

Natural Environment lens

Built Environment lens

1. Approach
2. Classifying and Valuing
3. National Ecosystem Assessment
4. Integrated Biodiversity
5. Nature Improvement Areas
6. Local Nature Partnerships

1. Planning
2. Zoning and Ordering
3. Sustainability Assessments
4. Development/Neighbourhood Plans
5. Enterprise Zones / Green Belts
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Government Policy

Natural Environment lens

1. Habitat and Landscape
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Built Environment lens

1. DCLG
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Scale

Natural Environment lens

Built Environment lens
New Designation

Natural Environment lens

Forest of Bowland Nature Improvement Area

Built Environment lens

Birmingham Enterprise Zone
New Partnerships

Natural Environment lens

- National Ecosystem Assessment
- Integrated Biodiversity Development Areas
- Nature Improvement Areas
- Local Nature Partnerships

Built Environment lens

- Development/Neighbourhood Plans
- Enterprise Zones / Green Belts
- Local Enterprise Partnerships
Disintegrated Policy Outcomes in the Fringe

National Park Authority required demolition whilst Welsh government promoted roundhouse as exemplar.

Flooding: shortly afterwards 5000 new houses built.
What is the Missing Ingredient?

Natural Environment lens

Built Environment lens
What is the Missing Ingredient?

Natural Environment lens  Built Environment lens
Narrative 2: Whose Authority?

- No Room
- Duty to Co-operate vs Duty to Protect
- Scalar tension produces different outcomes
Narrative 2: Whose Authority?

- Administrative boundaries vs. natural boundaries
- Whose boundaries are best; spoilt for choice!
Narrative 3: Building Sustainable Communities?

- New Settlement
- 7500 new houses
- Community infrastructure
  - Section 106 trigger
  - Economic vs social viability
Overcoming Disintegration
Overcoming Disintegration

Should have gone to Spec systems
Overcoming Disintegration

Natural Environment

Built Environment

POLICY REALM

Time

Connectivity

Values

ECOSYSTEM APPROACH

SPATIAL PLANNING

BIRMINGHAM CITY University
TIME: Learning and Applying Lessons

• To boldly go.............
• “Path to excellence is paved with failure”
• Critical examination of past policy interventions

West Midland Planners learning lessons from Regional Planning
TIME: Learning and Applying Lessons

“What about Ebenezer Howard and his visions these were long term; we don't have this kind of thinking anymore ... Why?” BCU
TIME: Learning and Applying Lessons

- Countryside Management Approach
  - Integrated remit
  - Field-based
  - Needs based

BUT

- Funding vulnerability
- Rarely linked to statutory planning policy and plans
CONNECTIONS: Securing Multifunctionality
CONNECTIONS: Securing Multifunctionality

“Green infrastructure planning across landscape scale areas crossing administrative boundaries.... The role of infrastructure planning is crucial but needs to be at the right scale”. BEP
CONNECTIONS: Securing Multifunctionality
VALUES: Achieving Creative Fringes by Challenging Convention

“How can we bring about a cultural shift to get away from taking it for granted that population and consumption per capita will continue to grow” BEP
VALUES: Achieving Creative Fringes by Challenging Convention

“Land value is the main barrier to RUF being used for local food production and other innovative things ......” LWM
VALUES: Achieving Creative Fringes by Challenging Convention

Baseline £ Value of Green Services

Multiple Benefits

- Heat island
- Flood protection
- Food production
- Pollination
- Water quality
- Soil quality
- Carbon sequestration
- Biodiversity
- Health
- Recreation
VALUES: Achieving Creative Fringes by Challenging Convention

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£11.66 million p.a.
VALUES: Achieving Creative Fringes by Challenging Convention

Chemin De Fer - Paris

Sandwell: Urban Agriculture
VALUES: Achieving Creative Fringes Challenging Convention

- “..... Green Belt just protects now very affluent commuter belt settlements ........ This culture of negativity and restriction restricts freedom of manoeuvre for planners and the development industry”. WMRAF
What is the Core Ingredient for Success?
Re-inventing Growth on the Fringe

• **Orchestrate** bold new visions of the fringe
• **Secure** multiple benefits from/for economy, nature and community
• **Enable** adaptation through experimentation and creativity
• **Employ** core principles of equity (social & environmental) & quality of life
• **Cross** boundaries to identify opportunities
Disintegrated development at the rural–urban fringe: Re-connecting spatial planning theory and practice


* Birmingham City University, Birmingham School of the Built Environment, United Kingdom
** Natural England, United Kingdom
*** National Farmers Union, United Kingdom
++++ Localise West Midlands, United Kingdom
***** West Midlands Rural Affairs Forum, United Kingdom
****** David Jarvis Associates, United Kingdom
******* Birmingham Environment Partnership, United Kingdom
******** Green Economics, United Kingdom
********* West Midlands Regional Assembly, United Kingdom
********** Birmingham City University, Birmingham Institute of Art and Design, United Kingdom

Alister.scott@bcu.ac.uk  twitter @bcualisterscott