

Strategic Planning: The Direction of Travel

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Planning in the age of uncertainty

20 March 2018





“This government is committed to localism and greater local decision-making in planning. The flawed top-down targets of regional planning, centrally imposing development upon communities, built nothing but resentment. They will hang over communities no more.”

Eric Pickles, Secretary of State, March 2013

Strategic planning : The wilderness years

- Reluctance of local politicians to make difficult decisions ‘in the interests of the greater good’ - no protection provided by the ‘blame game’
- NPPF’s objectively assessed housing needs significantly increases housing targets over RSS, particularly in areas of constraint
- Local planning becomes ‘planning by numbers’ with vision & strategy component downgraded.
- The Duty to Cooperate unable to deliver effective strategic planning, particularly around the main cities where devolution fails
- LPEG points to failures in strategic planning as key blockage on local plan progress and housing delivery



BRITAIN'S NOT BUILDING

Daniel Miller, Losttime

Strategic planning: reinventing the wheel

February 2017

Housing White Paper: New 'strategic' local plan proposed; statement of common ground to give more teeth to Duty to Cooperate.

"...we would like to see more and more local authorities working together to produce a strategic plan over a wider area on the functional economic geography that is right for their part of the world..."

Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017: statutory requirement to set out 'strategic priorities'; more LP intervention powers including provisions to allow the Secretary of State to direct the preparation of a joint local plan where this would *"facilitate the more effective planning of the development and use of land in the area"*.

£5bn Housing Infrastructure Fund launched (successful bids announced 1 Feb 2018)

"We want to fund those schemes that take a strategic approach, with strong local leadership and joint working to achieve higher levels of housing growth..."

Right Homes in Right Places: Details on SCG; new LP 'tests of soundness' proposed to ensure effective strategic planning

"...today we're also publishing a requirement for a "statement of common ground", a new framework that will make cross-boundary co-operation more transparent and more straightforward."

SoS LP intervention process initiated

"My decisions on interventions will also be informed by the wider planning context in each area (specifically the extent to which authorities are working cooperatively to put strategic plans in place)"

Budget 2017: Endorsement for Cam-MK-Ox Corridor; Thames Estuary 2050 Commission; new 'strategic infrastructure tariff' to be introduced; 5 new towns in SE proposed

Industrial Strategy White Paper

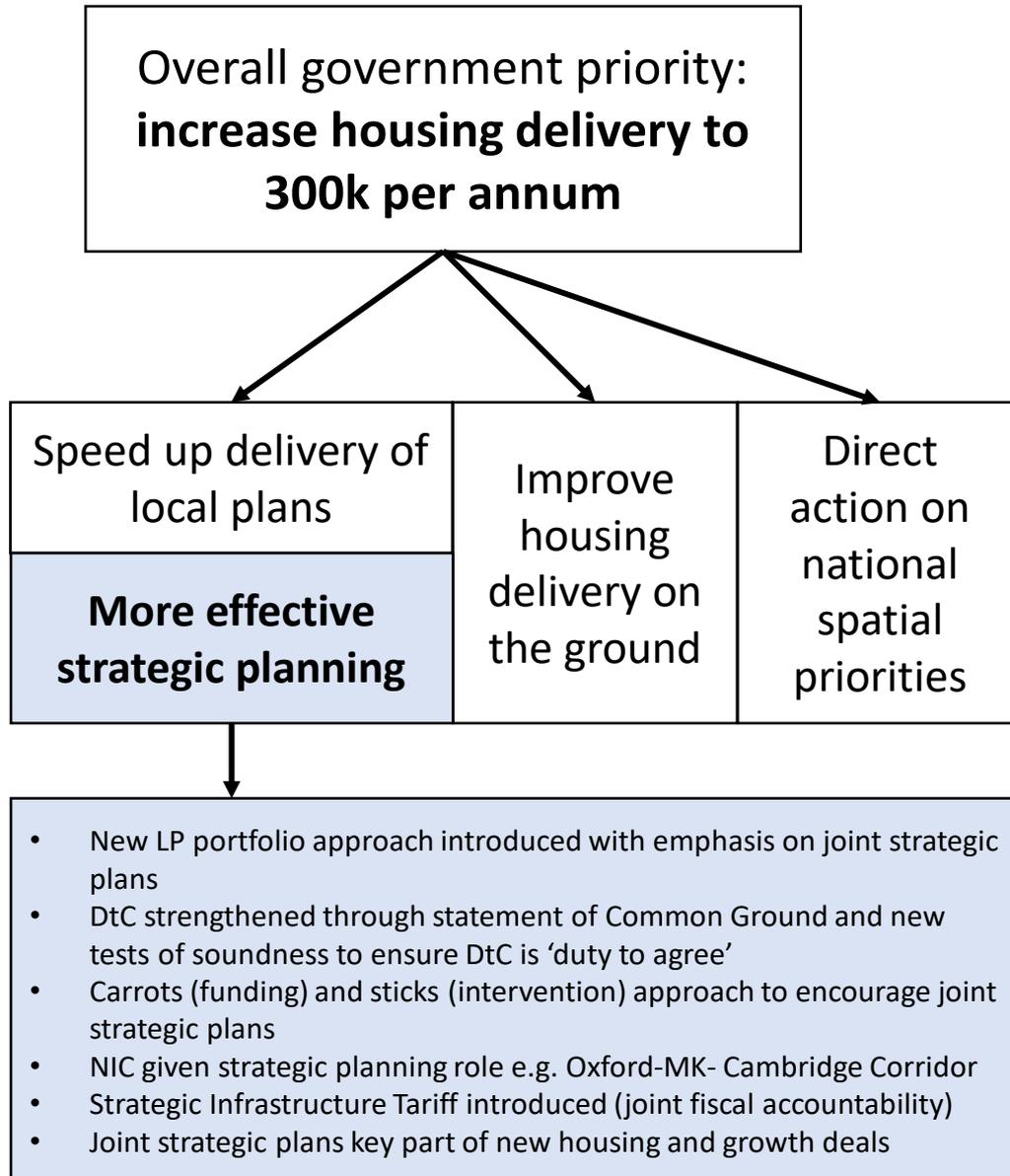
"We want to support greater collaboration between councils, a more strategic approach to planning housing and infrastructure..."

Planning Delivery Fund launched *"to support greater collaboration between councils, a more strategic approach to planning housing and infrastructure..."*

March 2018

Draft NPPF/PPG published: confirms approach to strategic planning and offers additional incentives for joint planning e.g. 5 year land supply to be managed across joint planning area

Strategic planning: reinventing the wheel



“Building the homes our country needs is an absolute priority for this government and so I’m delighted the Prime Minister has asked me to serve in this role. The name change for the department reflects this government’s renewed focus to deliver more homes and build strong communities across England.”

Sajid Javid, 15 January 2018

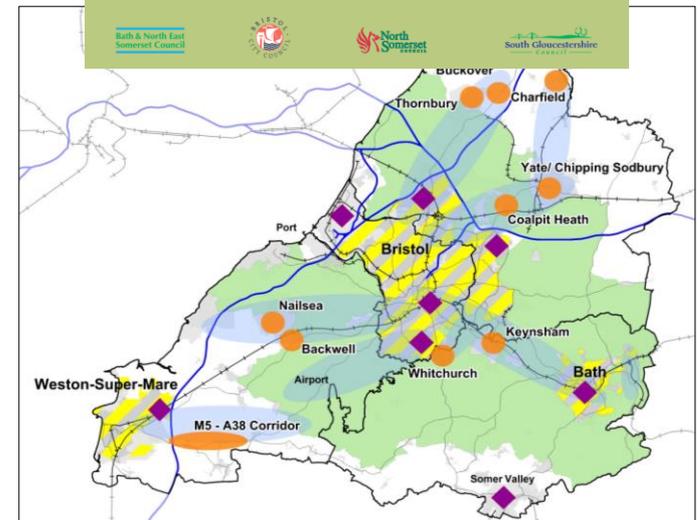
strategic planning 2018

- More **effective strategic planning emerging by stealth rather than design**, mainly due to failures of DtC, the opportunities offered by a bigger spatial.
- Devolution largely failed across southern England but highlighted **merits of better collaboration** on strategic planning & infrastructure delivery
- Recognition that **planning at ‘city region’ scale essential** with strategic development strategies being prepared by most Mayoral Combined Authorities – only major city without planning at city-region scale is London!
- **Changing long term spatial strategies** emerging as a result of government encouragement for new communities (Garden Towns) and strategic infrastructure led growth solutions
- **Government push for infrastructure led ‘growth deals’** (e.g. Oxfordshire) to boost housing supply and incentivise joint plans
- Still some joint core strategies/aligned strategies but **increasing number of new style joint strategic plans** now being prepared – West of England, Oxfordshire, Greater Exeter, South Essex & South West Herts - Government’s model of preference
- Increasing number of **non-statutory strategic planning and infrastructure frameworks** being prepared
- Still reluctance in some areas to work across local authority boundaries but **joint planning may happen anyway as a result of increasing pressures on local government finance & restructuring**
- Re-emergence of more effective strategic planning exposed **significant gaps exposed in strategic planning skills and capacity**

Strategic planning 2018

West of England Joint Spatial Plan

- 4 LPAs (Bristol, South Gloucestershire, BANES, North Somerset) working within 'voluntary' governance arrangements to deliver statutory joint plan; final decision-making remains with individual LAs
- Strategic focus & planning scope – only 7 policies, key diagram with no site allocations, general extent of Green Belt set
- Supported by more detailed DPDs prepared in parallel (but one stage behind)
- Joint LTP prepared alongside JSP
- 'Housing deal' now being negotiated with Government
- Will be first to be tested at Examination (due to be submitted to PINs this month)



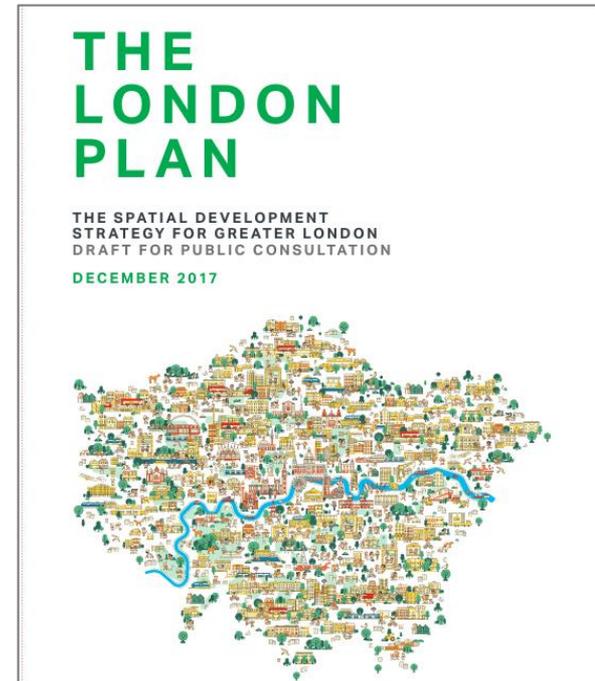
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South Essex Joint Strategic Plan

- Long term growth area covering Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point, Rochford, Southend and Thurrock
- Significant LP challenges across the area culminating in Castle Point DtC failure (Feb 2017) and 3 out of 6 LPAs subject to potential LP intervention
- Recognition by Leaders that LAs needed to be in control of own destiny, maximise investment opportunities and influence wider priorities (e.g. London's growth, Thames Estuary Commission).
- Move away from numbers game to focus on 'place' recognising importance of promoting their ambition for growth
- South Essex 2050 visioning process Led by Leaders resulted in new shared leadership structure in early 2018 - Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA)
- JSP being prepared on accelerated timetable alongside long term strategic infrastructure priorities and local industrial strategy

Last but not least....

- London Plan aims to consume own smoke - is this realistic? Shared risks of failure need to be managed with neighbouring authorities
- No DTC solution in areas adjoining London within M25 i.e. everyone in same boat with Green Belt constraints and significant pressures on infrastructure
- MGB still has important planning role and increasing green infrastructure role to play- as acknowledged by Mayor.
- But long term city-region wide solution is needed if integrity of MGB to be maintained. This is beginning to emerge but needs city-region wide co-ordination and more effective joint working



- **1m new homes** in O-MK-C Corridor
- **5 large new towns** in the South East (Government to indicate where)
- **Thames Estuary 2050 Commission** looking at long term growth options
- **Longer term opportunities** offered by Crossrail 2

Thank you!

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