

INFRASTRUCTURE, THE ECONOMY AND PLANNING: THE CASE FOR NEW APPROACHES

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Perspectives

- The best systems analysis is key - ITRC is supplying that (as perhaps are other current programmes).
- How to deal with the relation to economy? Is “economic growth” a separable goal? Or, in some formulations, a desirable goal?
- Part of any systems and economic analysis is spatial. A critical part of lock-in is for example spatial or geographical. What other intellectual or disciplinary resources can help thinking?
- Analysis points to programmes and levers, and these progress or impact via projects in real territories. Direct engagement with those territories can help – this is in part the field of planning specialists.

Scaling territories and scaling infrastructures

- Interdependencies are multiple and universal: co-location.
- Planning (of many forms) is one way to manage these.
- If space is at a premium (for whatever reason – “absolute” or relational), planning can be even more essential.

- The structured coherence of territories or regions – this is at the same time economic, social, environmental and political.
- How will infrastructure proposals “take” in a particular locality? Depends in part on the growth or non-growth coalitions of influential actors in that locality.

Sizes of infrastructures

- Thinking more carefully about scale issues.
- Normal categorizations (micro, meso, macro) already point to inter-relationships with existing built forms and landscapes.
- What is likely to fit or be found acceptable in each location very different - Shanghai to European cityscapes to English rurality.
- Understanding and managing scalar relations and also timescales demands macro strategising, at national and sometimes higher levels, as well as planning at fine grain urban scales.

So – bring back (or bring in) spatial planning as part of the steering tool kit

- A necessary step, before then thinking through the relations with the rest of the levers – fiscal, behavioural changers (“education”), other state regulation.
- The rest of the presentation offers pointers which can help to make this a more sophisticated instrument for the British case –
 - Identifying current weaknesses.
 - Using available strengths, and developing these – these include learning from the strong points of other countries in the infrastructure field.

Current weaknesses

- Fragmentation of UK state initiatives.
- Examples include disconnected National Policy Statements, limited National Infrastructure Plan, absence of any effective planning above the local level.
- For example transport – no national strategy, unlike most European states. So for rail system (including HS2), road schemes, airport systems (Davies Commission), ports and logistics, policy evolves in fragmentary manner.
- Links beginning to be made to the state regulation instruments (OFWAT, OFGEM etc), but some way to go.

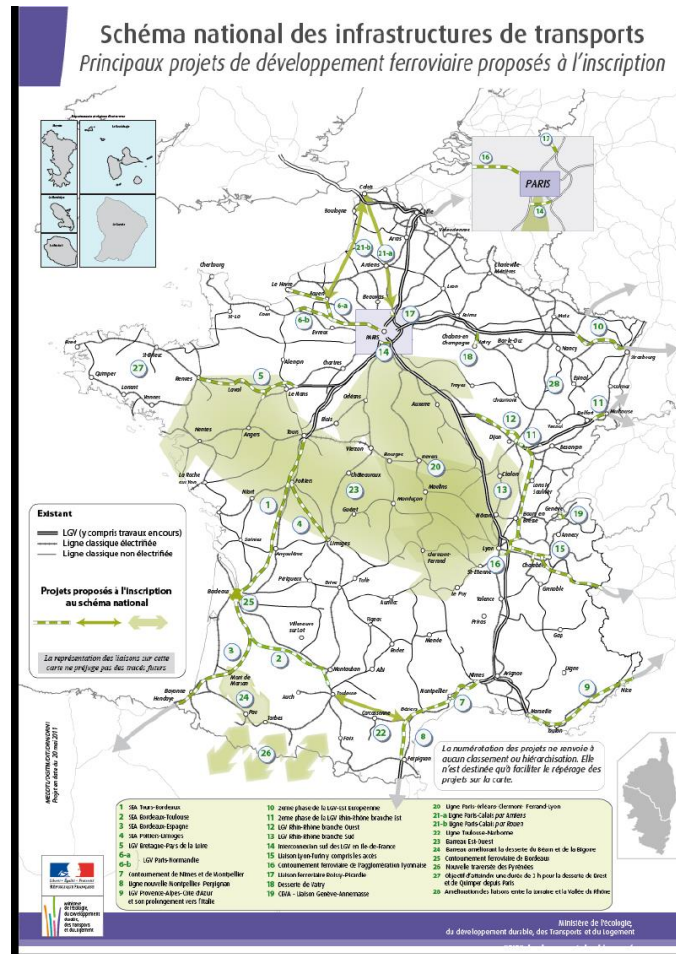
European examples of integration

- No ideal models to copy, but examples to learn from.
- National spatial planning (Netherlands, Scotland), or at least sectoral planning (transport plans in France, Germany etc) can help.
- These require core data and analysis capacities, a proper evidence base kept up to date – DATAR in France, BBSR in Germany, PBL in Netherlands etc. An understanding of key spatial changes at national level and their links to infrastructure dynamics.
- Compared with mistakes in big infrastructures which generate costs for decades, this sort of intelligence ought to be seen as very good value.

National Policy Strategy for Infrastructure and Spatial Planning (Netherlands 2012)



SNIT map for high speed rail network

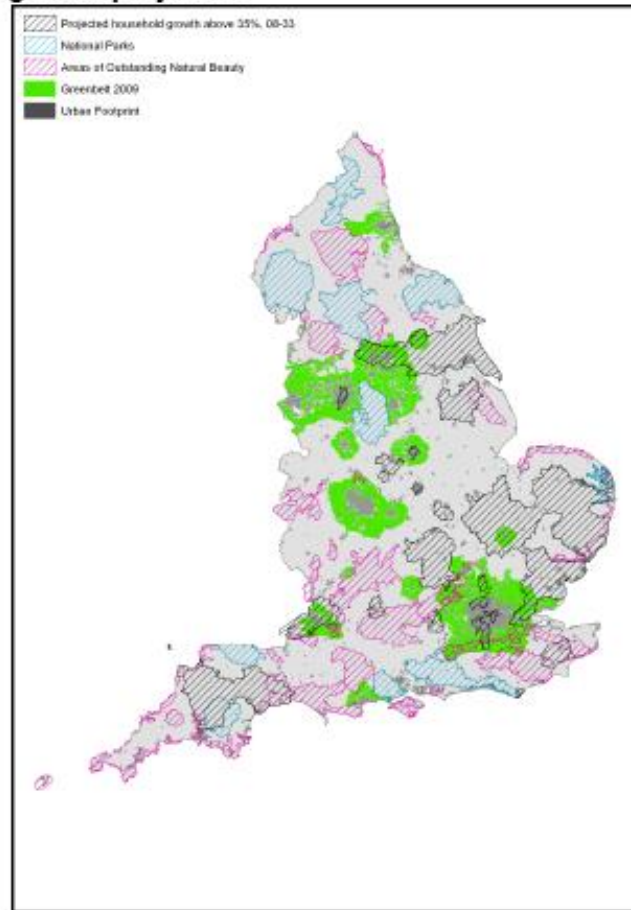


Planning resources – parts of the jigsaw

- Small scale work by planners – the RTPI's Map for England, the TCPA's Lie of the Land (both growing from work since 2000).
- Land Use Futures Foresight report of 2010. Developed a mosaic and overlay approach to maximising the usefulness of UK land resources on all dimensions. But left aside by policy makers, not developed.
- With the massive steps forward from ITRC, there ought to be scope now to start to put together the puzzle.

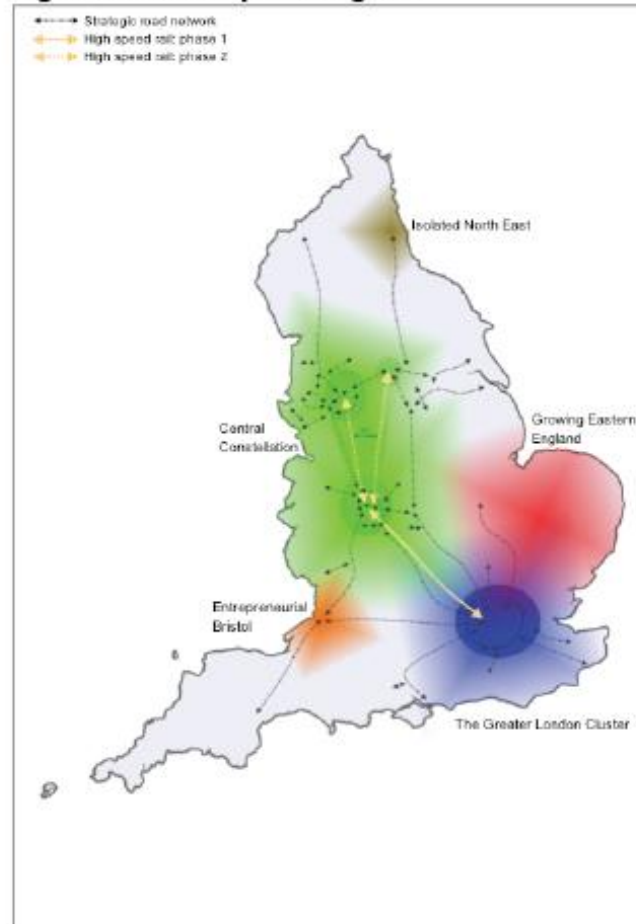
Map for England – simple overlays

Figure 3.6 Key landscape designations and household growth projection

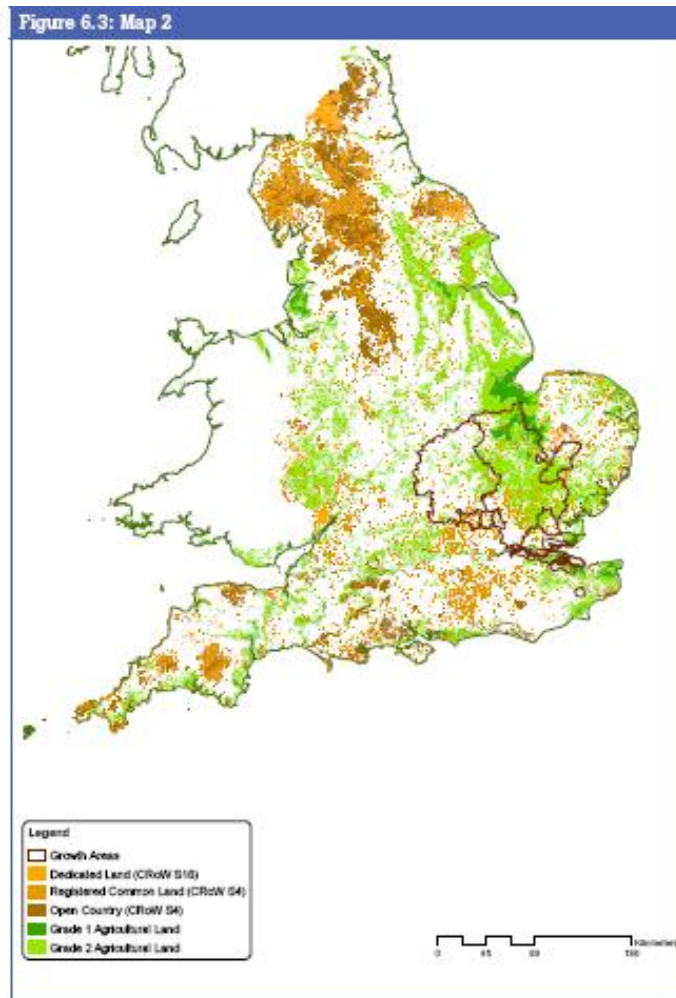


Map for England – spatial imagining

Figure 5.4 Multi-speed England



Land Use Futures (Foresight 2010)



But who puts the puzzle together and starts to recognise the resulting picture?

- Expertise critical.
- But infrastructure transitions will depend on democracy.
- Learning from consensual and deliberative political systems.
- Developing techniques at national level – the Grenelle example in France, and the French energy debate 2012-2014.
- Bringing in more deliberative approaches early in project development – as in the Commission Nationale du Debat Public since 1995 in France.

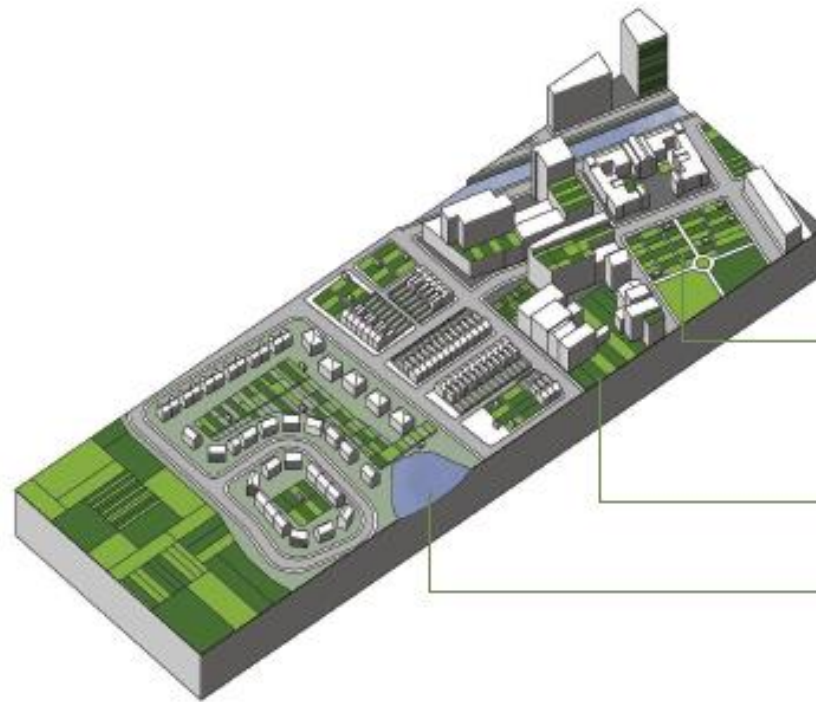
Public deliberation for new infrastructure systems

- The goal should be continual national and regional public conversations.
- Clearly, not continual in the sense of always being revised, but continually researched and checked on (in parliamentary or public commissions), once the core commitments decided upon.
- Depending on sectors, core commitments should be valid for long futures – ideally!
- A problem in the UK, as trust in politics at a low level.
- Infrastructure transitions could be one of the zones where efforts could be made to develop new processes, building new styles and trust.

Infrastructure and planning

- Infrastructure can and does lead planning – in strong planning traditions, infrastructure of all kinds is used to steer urbanisation, countryside policies, ecological management.
- But this needs a strong and integrated spatial planning capacity – which is not currently present, at least in England.
- Retrofit 2050 shows the way at the urban level.
- A new initiative is needed at the metropolitan, regional and national levels in England, to coordinate responses to demographic and economic change, and the infrastructure transitions.

Retrofit 2050 – Self-reliant Green city



SELF-RELIANT GREEN CITY

The city as a self-reliant bio-region, living in harmony with nature

Lower economic growth

Fall in urban densities

Cooperative and collectivist values underpin new models of shared ownership

Significant decrease in overall energy consumption

Re-localisation of production and consumption

Rise of urban agriculture

Green and blue space, local biomass and biodiversity are all harnessed and integrated into the city

Mend and make do culture – focus on re-use and recycling

- Thanks.
- Any comments later to
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