



Place-based policy in London

Introduction

The premise of *Where We Live Now* has been the understanding that place does not figure strongly enough in decision-making, which instead involves too many top-down and 'one size fits all' approaches. The purpose of the project is to highlight the sense of locality and distinctiveness of places, and thus the need for moving beyond departmental silos and attempting some form of policy integration when we think about national macro policies that affect vastly different places.

The project has taken place in the context of debates around devolution within the United Kingdom, and crucially the referendum to exit the European Union occurred at the midpoint of the project. This has been a significant focus in discussions on growth, inequality and disenfranchisement around the England and Wales, and will be discussed further in this paper on London also.

Manchester, Cornwall, Cardiff

This series of discussions has looked at place-based productivity in the context of each location. Inevitably each discussion has raised a unique set of issues and highlighted some of the tensions in implementing wider government policies. In Manchester this focus has been on employment and skills mismatch, urban gentrification, and crisis-driven rather than preventive social services. In Cornwall, a gamut of experts across local government, research and enterprise are looking at ways to build on existing assets and plan strategically to provide an attractive place to live and work for future generations. The debate in Cardiff was focused much more on the interrelation between productivity issues such as unemployment, and health-related inequalities.

All discussions highlighted that distinctiveness at different levels - whether it be the city level, community level, or regional level - has (or should have) a place in our decision-making. Generally, all agree that it can be frustrating to work with top-down policies when, at the local level, it is clear what needs to be done, and what the opportunities and risks are.

London

London is a place from which many of the top-down policies originate, and yet, it is its own place and has its own communities and needs. London is just as vulnerable because it also receives top-down policies that may not have been created for the benefit of the receiving community or place. It has particularly acute issues such as population growth and housing - both affordability and supply - which this briefing will explore.

What follows here is a summary of the discussion, and does not represent the views of the British Academy.

SUMMARY

1. London is a city which looks successful and is in many respects – it is at the top of the list in economic competitiveness and other global indicators - but London does not score very well in terms of well-being. Social and spatial polarisation are continuing issues, as well as increasing inequality. The same issues are being experienced in other parts of the country where discussions have turned to a re-evaluation of our measures of success, which look at growth, competitiveness and economic factors, and whether we need to measure success in broader ways that capture social issues such as integration and mixed communities.
2. A recurring question in the course of the *Where We Live Now* project is at the nexus of productivity, growth and well-being, and the relationship between them: the project has asked whether well-being should be the end goal, given that growth and productivity are a means to that end? Currently employment, welfare services, and wider infrastructure seem to be organised purely for economic growth and productivity as the ‘be all and end all’.
3. London is very particular within the British context. It is useful to bring connections and learning from other places and other countries but there are particular things about London such as massive growth, housing pressures, London’s position as a global city and competitiveness at the international level, that mark it out. Looking to history, there has always been change and London has always been under pressure, but Londoners can be quite adaptable to change.
4. The relationship between the outer boroughs and London as a whole is a good case study of a key concern for the *Where We Live Now* project - the level at which people relate to place compared to the level at which policy is made. In terms of the boroughs and infrastructure, the question remains where the decisions that are going to work for London as a whole should be made, and to what extent decisions should be made and implemented locally.
5. Some key questions raised in this paper relate to the purpose of development – whether it is being built for young families or global elites - and whether developers and local authorities are then accountable to communities. Related to this is the question of the extent to which local communities ought to be involved and whether development would be improved by this. Finally, there is the balance between the existing local influence and the inter-generational community.
6. We must understand the final results in terms of the model of development for higher density construction, such as mid-rise developments with good public realm, such that we understand what ‘good’ looks like – currently we do not always know how to get there or how to deliver quality. It is important to look at the environmental and cultural contexts also – there are many factors that improve well-being and quality in broader terms than simply focusing on new build and new architectural design.
7. There is strong disagreement on the kind of devolution that might be preferable for London, or how far it should go. The question remains whether greater centralisation and fiscal powers within London in terms of controlling infrastructure would detract from some of the issues inherent in the short-term political cycle.
8. In attempting to solve London’s problems around growth and housing we are currently starting with where there is space (such as brown or green land, rather than starting with the concept of place-making, which will undoubtedly lead to a different outcome for place.

A snapshot of London

Population Growth

The population of London is currently 8.6 million and is expected to reach 10 million by 2036, if not before. To put this into context, London must increase, as a city, by the size of Birmingham. With such growth, additional considerations arise such as transport, where a 50% increase in demand is expected. This entails infrastructure developments and demands on power.

Housing

A key consideration of this population boom is housing supply, but more importantly, affordable housing. The new Mayor of London has emphasised the importance of this, in addition to other major manifesto issues such as security, culture and air quality. There is also agreement in Central Government, behind the scenes, that housing in London is an absolute priority. Many organisations are working on this, such as London First, with the "Fifty Thousand Homes" campaign, aiming to develop so many houses year on year, something which has not been achieved since the period 1930 to 1939.

Brexit

The UK vote to leave the European Union created huge amounts of uncertainty. In the long term, there are likely to be major impacts on London as one of the world's leading cities, with global employers based at its heart, and a diverse workforce from all over the EU and beyond.

Brexit is already beginning to raise issues about the need to reconsider how we use resources. In London, 7% of the tax that is collected is kept, whereas in New York it is 50% and in Tokyo it is 77%. Some sort of fiscal devolution to London and greater powers over tax-raising abilities are key considerations for a post-Brexit capital.

Attraction

Despite the somewhat precarious and uncertain future, a new PwC Cities of Opportunity report looking at global competitiveness shows London topping the leader board across a whole range of measures, related to its attraction for people to live and do business there. The challenge will be to generate creative solutions to maintain this global standing.

Edge City: Croydon

Sense of Place

In 1993, Charles James said of Croydon, 'the horror of these places is that they have no real sense of identity; there is no "there" there'. The National Trust project in Croydon has looked to highlight a sense of appreciation and integrity of place. The project looked at the places in which people live, work and play.

Some of the themes included the value to local communities of local heritage, of green space and of beauty. This included testing the boundaries of these concepts, and questioning what is meant when we talk about heritage. For the National Trust, this has been an important exercise in talking about heritage more broadly than rose-covered cottages in the Cotswolds.

Over the course of the project, activities were designed to get people to form an experience of heritage, green space or beauty that makes them care about a place, which then leads them to participate in the protection, celebration, development and betterment of those places.

History and identity

Working with the London Borough of Croydon, the Trust looked at the longer history of Croydon as well as more recent history, recognising that Croydon is undergoing extraordinary development. For the Council, this raised genuine debates about what should be kept and preserved, and what should be pulled down and regenerated.

The project attempted to understand what value people place on some of these buildings. For example, the NLA Tower, now known as No. 1 Croydon, is affectionately known as the 'Threepenny Bit' and 'Fifty Pence' building. This forms part of a conversation about what is important and essential to Croydon's sense of place.

Part of this is to question whether Croydonians have a sense of pride and identity other than that which is often espoused by the national press and possibly also by Londoners.

Activities and volunteers

Key activities included walking tours, and access and tours of key sites. Interestingly, the walking tour of Croydon scored higher on visitor experience than some of the more traditional Trust activities. The project also included research into Croydon's recent history such as: social and architectural history of the Fairfield Halls, the College Green area and the wider New Town area. This supported the Council in understanding what they might consider listing locally and nationally.

The project included a team of 30 volunteers, only a handful of whom had volunteered for the National Trust before. The result was a new group of people aware of the Trust's work and interested to learn and retell the story of Croydon. All volunteers expressed interest in working with the National Trust again in the future.

Outcomes

The project generated a media opportunity to debate Croydon and its heritage value as well as to reposition Croydon's brand. Media coverage in national press and mainstream media was overwhelmingly positive, as was feedback on the tours and opportunities to explore Croydon.

Significantly, the project included important place-based Key Performance Indicators:

- 70% of the tour visitors felt inspired to play a bigger part in the future of the redevelopment of Croydon.
- 88% would take part in debate about the future of heritage in Croydon.
- 72% agreed that the whole experience had revealed much more about the role that architecture plays in creating community and place.

Protecting Heritage in the Context of the London Plan

Density Matrix

London has around 20,000 heritage assets, and this figure refers only to the designated ones, let alone the conservation areas. As a result, development to cope with London's population growth can often feel like a major challenge, but London has always been under pressures of different kinds.

The latest iteration of this infrastructure-led development is the Crossrail stations – these locations coincide with where growth is expected to be delivered, such as outer borough town centres. A lot of the drivers for this are the density matrix in the London Plan, which seeks to optimise housing potential. It is focused on residential intensification, but could be more nuanced in relation to the character of a place.

Heritage Assets

The opportunity areas identified for intensification or regeneration coincide with about 5,500 heritage assets so there is a potential challenge. Many of those places can also grow into town centres – historically, as London developed, it is all of the villages which surround the two principal cities which make this a great world city. Many of those town centres are villages which still have this native heritage asset so they are an integral part of a place and the character of a place, and probably face the greatest challenges to maintain that.

Uniqueness

London is often compared with New York, Paris and other world cities in terms of its appeal, cultural offering, and the desirability of living, working and doing business there. This is a reflection of how it has developed and grown, which makes it a complex place.

In the context of heritage assets, this global appeal for business and tourism raises important questions about the responsibility of professionals talking about the future of London, what to keep, and what to change.

Perception of Heritage

Development can occur in many historic places without losing vital heritage assets. King's Cross is often given as a great example of maintaining heritage and providing regeneration. For this example to be useful, we have to question why we are so proud of that particular place and that 'new' quarter of London. Possibly, because it has not obliterated everything which was there before but it has used it to its optimum and embraced heritage within a new purpose.

Conditional Heritage

Historic England operates a Heritage at Risk register. In London, conservation areas are increasingly being placed on the register, which coincides with the infrastructure-led approach to development and growth. However, there is also an increasing conservation deficit; so many of those assets which were on the register, which are easy to address, are being resolved. This leaves those, which are difficult to bring back into economic use in the current climate of constrained resources.

An added point of contention here is the loss of heritage expertise in local authorities. There has been a 31% drop since 2006 so there is often nobody to advise on how these things should be managed. However, this must be understood in context – contrast this loss of expertise with 35% to 40% losses in revenue budget by local authorities over the same period. It is a response – if the Government cuts, local authorities must also cut.

Creative Solutions

We need creative solutions to address some of these tensions in terms of place-making, and professionals across local policy, government departments. Heritage and development need to be better at working together, with the local community as an integral component – not just a consultation tick box. We need continuous and early engagement in order to identify and achieve the right solution for a place, and, consequently, leave a positive legacy for future generations.

Boosting Economic Growth and Prosperity in London

London's Success

As has been discussed, London is phenomenally successful, not just in the UK context but also in the European and global context. A prosperous London is good for the rest of the country; but that growth needs to be managed better. Currently, approximately 30% of the tax that is generated from work for the whole country stems from London.

Growth and Jobs

There is a wave of new work and a focus on knowledge-intensive businesses such as creative and digital firms, as well as business and professional services. It is difficult to predict the range of jobs there will be in the next 10 or 15 years: for example, app developer jobs were unheard of 10 years ago. Whilst there is a strong argument to say that tech jobs can go anywhere due to connectivity, the fact remains that many start up tech firms choose Old Street and other parts of East London. This is one of the most expensive places in London, and its popularity is driving costs up.

One of the main reasons for this is the agglomeration of goods and services – London has access to a huge number of graduates not just from London universities. In addition, it is possible for London to hold off the competition as a critical mass of global firms are based in the capital. Globalisation and technological change have seen things concentrate into particular places, which is why London will always be in the limelight. That is a challenge for the wider UK economy.

Competitive Strengths/Weaknesses

London's competitiveness is exceptional in attracting high-skilled jobs - the challenge arises in maintaining that, especially with the constant pressure to reduce immigration. In addition, there are strains on housing and transport infrastructure: how to continue to attract those highly skilled people without expanding the city beyond its limits.

In addition, the mid-level section of the UK workforce has been lost in recent years (Labour Force Survey data 1980-2012), which has the potential to increase inequality, with people locked out of employment opportunities in the middle of the economy. Such jobs are skilled but not knowledge-intensive, and account for a large portion of private sector jobs that have been moved overseas, or, in the case of the public sector, have been lost due to cuts. This also includes skilled manufacturing, which has been heavily hit by globalisation. It is no secret that single industry towns have been hit very hard over the last 40 years, and there are no signs that this is going to change.

Other Congestion Costs

The upshot of the status quo is that we are making a choice not to expand and not to consider more aggressive densification. Growth in London is increasingly unaffordable and unsustainable, and contributes to inequality as those who can afford to live in London, spend a lot of their wages on housing.

In addition, anybody living elsewhere in the country is priced out of opportunities for where the best jobs and salaries are situated by the prohibitive cost of housing.

Summary

Housing is the biggest challenge in London. More control is needed in order to direct growth in London so that it benefits all. Whilst there is a Mayor of London, more fiscal autonomy, and control in business rates and stamp duty could help to ensure that more decision-making is delegated to people who have the incentives and information to make the good decisions for wellbeing as well as the economy.

City of London

The City uses its assets, resources and influence to help with skills, housing, green space, and infrastructure across London. The Corporation recognises that the Square Mile and its future prosperity is entirely interlinked with the prosperity of London as a whole. An example of this is the City Bridge Trust which is the City's charity that gives around £15 million to £20 million a year to support Londoners in surrounding areas.

Office Space

The City has 9 million square metres of offices - 70% of the floor space in the City is offices. In addition, there is over a million more square metres of office floor space on the way. This is also a major consideration beyond the borders of the Square Mile. As has been discussed, east London is struggling to house the volume of start-up firms setting up shop and new forms of working, such as shared offices, are becoming the norm. There is an acute shortage of affordable space for SMEs.

Retail Units, Hotels and Houses

The City has also become a better place to shop and eat with 1,900 retail units, a huge increase from the past. In addition, there are 5,000 hotel bedrooms and 7,100 houses. This does pose a challenge as over 99% of the daytime population is made up of people going to work. Less than 1% of its population are residents so construction, freight deliveries and other disruptive activities must happen at night-time without affecting this tiny resident population.

Listed Buildings and Conservations Areas

The City of London has over 600 listed buildings and 26 conservation areas. However, not all listed buildings are equal. This is a huge challenge given the amount of available space.

The Tower of London is not in the City but the Corporation is conscious of the City's relationship with this monument, as well as Tower Bridge, which the City manages, but neither end of which is located in the City.

Open Spaces

There are over 200 open spaces in the Square Mile, ranging from tiny parks to churchyards. The City is facing a challenge of how to make the best use of these spaces, as well as of heritage buildings overall, so that they are both tranquil and vibrant places.

Population

The daytime population in the City is likely to grow to over 500,000 people coming into the Square Mile every day. There are three categories for consideration here: capacity, connectivity, and character.

Capacity

The Corporation makes major efforts to ensure there is available space for development, including three-dimensional modelling. There is very limited space at street level so it is critical for space to be managed as well as possible. There are some key considerations in this:

- **Traffic:** The Corporation is intent on reducing the amount of traffic in the City, as well as spreading the amount of traffic for a longer period of the day. In addition, more space will be allocated to pedestrians and cyclists as over 90% of people moving around the City are on foot or on bicycle, and yet far less than 90% of the space is allocated to them.
- **Cycling:** There is need for a network across London for longer distance commuting, but there is also a challenge to make the entire City safe and easy to cycle in. The City of London Corporation is committed to making this happen, and working on the cycleways and quiet ways with the Mayor of London.
- **Third Space:** Going back to open spaces and those small, hidden away locations in the City, people should be able to sit in the public realm, either to relax or to have spontaneous meetings, which these places can facilitate.

Connectivity

There is a lot of optimistic chatter regarding technological connectivity for businesses, such as Google Fibre, but the fact remains that it is not very affordable for small businesses.

Character

People who work in London tend to have high-stress jobs and a higher tendency towards smoking, drinking, and other risky behaviours (ONS 2014). This low wellbeing profile means that suicide is also a major concern in London. The City of London is designing (and redesigning) places that not only lift people's spirits, but also build in preventative measures. For example, such measures include technology, cameras and signage.

Culture

The City has a unique cultural corridor, and the goal is for this to continue but there are related problems. For example, Aldgate is a bustling cultural hotspot but also raises concerns around well-being and air quality, as well as traffic and noise.

Similarly, Bank Junction is six intersecting chaotic roads. It is surrounded by Grade II listed buildings, the Royal Exchange, the Bank of England, and Mansion House. These should be places of tranquillity where pedestrians and cyclists can also flow through in any direction they wish, with less traffic and pollution.

Thames Central Open Spaces

Thames Central Open Spaces tries to protect and enhance Lower Marsh, a shopping centre with history reaching back to 1380, behind Waterloo Station. People live, work and shop there – as a result, there is a healthy local economy. There is no conflict between the wishes of the local community, the local economy, and Central London.

Garden Bridge

One of the issues with the proposed Garden Bridge is the nature of its introduction to the local community – it appeared to come in from on high as a ‘fait accompli’. There was a sense of shock that discussions had apparently taken place ‘behind closed doors’ for years. However, the real problem was that the local community, among others, felt it was inappropriate and blocked the views of the South Bank. That local space belongs in part to the community affected by the Garden Bridge. It also belongs to the rest of London, and the masses of visitors that come through. The argument has now turned to money and the spiralling cost, but it was originally about heritage and protecting the views of St Paul’s.

Aesthetics

This interest in aesthetics, in a community’s place and in the views of St Paul’s and Somerset House, are not usually considered to be within a community’s remit. TCOS has conducted eight public inquiries dealing with 15 tall buildings, and the aesthetic – obstructed views – is a huge issue.

An example of this tension is the proposed Doon Street Tower, near the National Theatre, which would obstruct views from the courtyard of Somerset House. English Heritage strongly opposed this, but when the local community – with the support of TCOS – made the same point in the inquiry, it was made clear that aesthetic concerns were not seen as part of the community’s remit. However, this is not the case – for example Somerset House is a place where local people took their children to play in the fountains, before fountains were placed on the South Bank. Aesthetic and leisure were, in fact, at the heart of the community’s interest.

Heritage and Tall Buildings

One of the key issues with protected views is that tall building construction operates on massive timescales. Blackfriars is an example of this – construction in this part of London began in 2000 and might just be ready in 2020. That is 20 years of blight to that area.

In addition, construction of such buildings damages the micro-climate and can ‘sterilise’ the area, in particular, by pushing out a lot of small businesses. This has occurred in Elephant & Castle, for example, where there was a hub of small businesses. The Old Kent Road is another example – there are a lot of small businesses as well as some large and medium-sized businesses, but that is a potential brownfield site that could deliver a lot of housing. Rather than dealing with that contradiction at a macro level, these areas are sometimes seen simply as housing reservoirs.

Exclusivity

At the opposite end of the spectrum, we have constructions like the Vauxhall Tower in which only 12 flats of 200 are occupied. This is an extreme example of the issue, but it might become a more common example of the exclusivity of permitted construction in London.

The global elite now has the ability to buy property and use it as an investment, which poses a problem for existing communities in terms of heritage projects, obstructed views, and affordable housing. It is not solely the global elite driving tall building construction, but it is part of the problem.

Summary

In terms of obstacles, the London Plan has its fair share of criticism. One problem has been the need to wait for a new mayor - in other words, to wait years for the political cycle in order to find a sympathetic ear to the community's concerns about the Garden Bridge.

The status quo of planning in London is also at fault for many of the issues communities are facing. On top of the exclusivity inherent in a lot of high-rise construction, planners focus on town centres as 'transport nodes' and thus support intensification in these locations.

We must remember that London is a thousand localities - the kernel of communities, the kernel of our identity and of so much of our heritage, purpose, values, the places with which we identify, and much more.

Inner and Outer London Boroughs

Inner London Boroughs

In Southwark, over the last six years there has been a 10% increase in employment of those aged 16 to 64, thus, 76.5% of Southwark's working age population is now in work. This is in stark contrast to a 1% increase in employment in the previous six years and with Camden where there has been a 1% increase over the same period.

Responsibility of Local Authorities

There is a tension between what local authorities are and are not responsible for, which affects what can be delivered. For example, local authorities can have significant impact on housing but far less impact on transport and infrastructure. Taking up the example of the Southwark end of the Old Kent Road, there is approximate space for 20,000 new homes, which is massive in terms of any regeneration project in London.

Bakerloo Line Extension

However, in order to deliver this, the extension of the Bakerloo Line must be delivered. Housing cannot happen without transport infrastructure improvement, and vice versa. It would be ideal to extend the Bakerloo line through Camberwell because this part of London is very poorly served by trains. However, Transport for London maintains that the local authority must pay up to 50% of the cost of the delivery of this project.

Outer London Boroughs

Trafalgar Place in Elephant & Castle is an example of a regeneration success story – it is one of the mayor's best new places to live and has had a real increase in density without the impression of overcrowding. Kingston is another borough which is pro-investment with lots of regeneration going on.

Contrast this with Barking & Dagenham which is also pro-regeneration and wants to see investment but is caught by the problem of viability and the lack of transport infrastructure, as well as the unwillingness of London and the country as a whole to pay for it. Barking & Dagenham has a massive brownfield site, but developers are stalling projects, certainly since the Brexit vote, because they do not believe that they are viable. In order to reach 50,000 homes a year in London, Barking & Dagenham must deliver that new housing.

Housing Capacity

There were two periods when London delivered the housing it needed – firstly in the 1930s with the expansion of suburbia (although we did not have town and country planning as we have today), and in the 1960s when local authorities were given the freedom and the wherewithal to build, and the Greater London Council was building estates, although construction was frequently held up because they were system-built and not particularly good examples of design. However, a high proportion of this housing was public sector.

Identity of Outer Boroughs

However, there is a further complication, namely boroughs that do not want to be part of this development, and do not necessarily see themselves as part of London. What incentives or penalties can be implemented? What conversations can be had to address the identity issue?

Extending the Bakerloo line to Bromley would make its development more viable by opening up parts of Bromley; however, there are those who do not see Bromley as part of London, but rather Kent. This is an anecdotal example of how local considerations can impact on major development aspirations which are important for London. This is the reality of the politics of London and its constituent parts.

GROWTH AND INEQUALITY

There are both tensions and contradictions between the issues of economic growth on one hand with London as a global city serving the elite, and housing and population growth on the other with London as a city of huge inequalities. So much wealth enters London, but local communities do not often feel the benefit of it. It could be argued that the competitiveness argument does not work, especially if social infrastructure is not provided. This raises the question of whether we can better spread the benefits of London's economic success and growth, and how we manage the population and employment growth in order to lead to more stable communities and improved inclusion and wellbeing.

Many of the issues being experienced around the country - social isolation and increasing polarisation - are also apparent in London. However, the intense nature of employment in London: high stress jobs, long hours and long commutes exacerbates these issues. Essentially, a market-led investment programme has serious limitations in terms of the wider benefits, potential public policy gains and the power of local authorities and other agencies to mitigate negative effects. Addressing the inter-relationship between these factors and the major growth mechanisms could be a positive force in reorienting the use of resources.

In addition, it is important to avoid being trapped in the illusion that growth will continue forever. Public investment is critical because, even when London is booming, not all of London is booming. This raises a key question about the purpose of much construction - are we building for international investment or are we building to meet London's housing needs? More thought must be given to the kinds of services that are needed to support communities.

EXISTING ASSETS AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

It is important to understand that which we already have that is of value, and is appreciated by those who work, live and move through London. This extends to those who visit London and the future generations that will come to inhabit the city. The integrity of a place owes a lot of its identity to historic environment and a sense of continuity as well as change.

Part of this is balancing what appeals and is economically possible both for young, global elites as well as young families, poorer people, and those who do less well-paid jobs. The economy of a city requires both ends of that spectrum to function properly and yet so often development in London is targeted at the elite, rather than building affordable blocks of small dwellings in accessible places, whether outer London areas such as Harrow or inner London areas such as Catford and Lewisham.

Place-making is also for the next generation including for people who, in the past, have not had the opportunity to live in those places. The neighbourhood planning component of the place-making debate maintains that it is the existing people who are influential in deciding what happens, without always thinking about the opportunity costs for others. Giving all decision-making to local people is not always the right choice.

SPACE AND SUPPLY

As has already been discussed, space is a key issue in London, in particular in the Square Mile. The London Plan includes a density policy, based on principles of sustainable residential quality. City Hall is now revising those principles and is likely to press for increased intensification. Between a half and two-thirds of schemes given planning consent over the last 10 years exceeded density guidelines and some were three or four times the target density range.

The King's Cross development was a good example in providing a significant mix of housing as well as mixed usage, as well as good public realm but the withdrawal of Government funding for social rented housing has led to a reduction of the mix in terms of family housing and social

rented housing. Place-making needs significant investment to get a good mix of social and market housing as well as other community facilities.

A converse example to Kings Cross of how not to do regeneration, according to *The Guardian* and others, is the Elephant & Castle shopping centre. Unlike public investment at King's Cross where c£120 million of public money was invested, no public money has gone into Elephant & Castle. That completely changes the economics of the approach to such projects.

We are not currently pursuing incremental suburban intensification although there is a case for it and the planned release of land for affordable housing, especially social rented housing, in appropriate locations on the edge of London with good public transport access and with a social infrastructure.

There is a need for a different model of housing which would be much more integrated within the fabric of London's communities, and goes back to a more diverse set of solutions related to mixed use developments. There is a false dichotomy that we are locked between either building very dense, big blocks of identikit flats or must look to the green belt.

DESIGN AND CO-PRODUCTION

There is an issue of housing supply but the issue is with the politics, not the economics. One idea would be to give a bigger voice to more people. Survey data by Create Streets shows that giving people agency will encourage them to support housing. If people feel that they can influence the nature of the built form and feel involved in it, they are more inclined to support it. In addition, it is possible to put in place a design code to ensure that new construction respects the existing area. There is an issue of quality and style at a point where we are about to do a huge amount of building.

As has already been discussed, people are often more influenced by the nature of built form - the aesthetic - than by financial incentives. In addition, they want buildings which contribute to a sense of place, not just provide buildings. However, this raises serious questions about how people can engage with these processes, and what mechanisms exist to enable them to communicate their views. There is also a lack of understanding on the part of developers on how to engage with communities, even though engaging with communities is always seen as a mark of success.

This challenge requires cultural change, process change and resource change. Previous attempts to provide official guidance on house design and character have foundered in the face of cost and resistance. But we do need to be more confident at the local level about ensuring design which respects local character and provides good places to live.

Part of the problem is the current state of architectural education and a lack of involvement of architects in other than statement buildings. The focus is often on aesthetic, construction and sustainability issues but little on community impact, use, and place.

In addition, risk is only considered in terms of viability and risk management, rather than neighbourhood effects. This is reflected in the development management element of planning, where there is more focus on economic viability than the impact on the local community and the public realm. There is often little consideration of broader social policy issues and whether the buildings are of any use to people, or even follow planning consents.

DEVOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE

The case for some form of fiscal devolution to London has already been discussed: however, a truly independent London is not a realistic option. London has a significant relationship with the

South East and East of England as well as shaping the national economy, and an independent London could be seen as a drain on the rest of the country.

A more sustainable route could be to revive strategic planning at national, regional and local levels so that the relationships within London, and between London and the rest of the country can be better understood and shaped.

HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The last London Plan was approved in 2013 and stated that 65,000 homes a year needed to be built. The Plan was going to generate 49,000 in a best-case scenario and at the time 23,000 a year were being developed.

Yet there are solutions that are not being thoroughly explored. Among them, as advocated by Lord Rogers and others, would be the revival of London's many high streets, integrating large numbers of new houses within the urban fabric. So instead of Barking Riverside, a better solution would be the intensification of Barking town centre and the improvement of Barking Station, which has problems with capacity, access and dilapidation.

In addition, there are many miles of A-road corridors. Mid-rise development is where the quantity of housing is still family friendly and the rental market can be satisfied. It also allows for small developers, small investors and small builders and would be much easier to build. Work conducted by the Skyline Campaign shows it is possible to achieve 2,000 units per mile. A bonus of this idea is that it re-uses heritage assets which add to the sense of community identity.

REPAIRING THE PAST

We have already discussed questions of quality, and the legacy of tall buildings to future generations, but this is part of a more serious, ongoing issue. The process of place-making and regeneration requires an understanding of the building blocks which create a sense of place, including heritage.

An example of a failure to do this might be Romford town centre, which exemplifies all that was done as part of the regeneration fashion in the post-war period of the '50s, '60s and '70s. A lot of what we are doing now in London is repairing the imposition of that particular type of regeneration, which swept the nation in the midst of the post-war housing crisis. For example, in that period lot of estates were built in which people were segregated from each other and other uses, and as a result any sense of street and history was lost.

Another example was the arrival of new forms of shopping, including shopping centres and supermarkets. Many high streets were changed radically with a total loss of character and demolition, sweeping away traditional shopping streets and shopping areas. Similarly, much construction took place in order to make room for the car - major motorways were built through Birmingham and Liverpool.

From the 1960s onwards London saw significant depopulation; some managed through the establishment of New Towns, through which those with a job were encouraged to relocate; and some which came about as the richer socio-economic groups chose to move to more attractive areas. One of the results of this was that in the mid 1970s the IMF halted the spending of local authorities on the reconstruction of cities, and Peter Shore, then Secretary of State for the Environment, issued the Inner Cities White Paper, a manifesto and a policy proposal to deal with depopulation. Now, the emphasis is on public transport rather than the car, on shared space rather than inner city motorways, on mixed use and integration, as well as the massive reconstruction and improvement of poor housing estates. This is all intended to repair the well-intentioned but misconceived notions of the past.

Returning to the present, No. 1 London Bridge has been replaced by The Shard, and Paternoster Square near St Paul's is now a set of identikit shops. It must be asked why those places did not survive: did they not function properly, or perhaps they did not provide anything useful during their working lives? A more positive example is the Peckham multi-storey car park, which has found success as an artistic hub and Proms venue. It works and has found a purpose.

WELL-BEING

A key component of the 'place' discussion is well-being. Well-being inequalities are linked but not as correlated as one might suppose. However, well-being in London is not particularly good compared to the national picture, especially in terms of anxiety. The life satisfaction of Londoners is not particularly high. As discussed, in the City in particular, stress and suicide are significant issues.

In terms of pressure on London, most immigrants to London come from cities, including much higher density cities than London. Thus far the density issues in London have been discussed in quite a harsh light, and yet, in global terms, they are not so bad. A lot of immigrants to London have come from communities in high-rises and other types of very dense housing with little access to green spaces. The point of this is that humans are very adaptable. Londoners, partly because of the immigrant population, might be said to be particularly adaptable.

The What Works Centre for Wellbeing has data on individual resilience and adaptability in relation to different life events. For example, the loss of a spouse has about a five-year adaptability curve, over which an individual will return to the level of well-being prior to the loss of a loved one. However, the things that are the hardest to adapt to are unemployment and commuting. If it has a big enough impact on one's well-being, it is very hard to become accustomed to it. Long-term unemployment has a knock-on effect on other aspects of well-being such as confidence and loss of certain social networks, which are very much part of well-being.

Well-being as an objective of strategic planning could make a significant contribution to community resilience, offering a support mechanism that can provide long-term smoothing at the local or regional level in between periodic spikes of economic growth. It is important that policy-makers continually evaluate the well-being impact of their interventions.

London shares many problems and opportunities with other cities around the world. There is a global basic set of factors that affect well-being such that we can learn from other places. If we think that London's circumstances are unique, we run the risk of not learning from places around the world.

Statistics in this briefing are drawn from the discussion and presentations at the roundtable so cannot be cited directly. If you have any queries about this briefing, the *Where We Live Now* project or the British Academy's policy activities, please contact:

Jamiesha Majevadia

Public Policy Adviser

j.majevadia@britac.ac.uk

