



European Dimension of British Planning

**Mark Tewdwr-Jones and
Richard H. Williams**

The European Dimension of British Planning

The UK government of Tony Blair is committed to fostering a European dimension of planning practice. Significant developments in relation to planning within Europe are occurring. The creation of the European Spatial Development Perspective, the reform of the Structural Funds, and the implementation of programmes to foster transnational cooperation between governments, will all impact on the UK government, and on the planning system in particular. Even within the United Kingdom, devolution and regionalisation will bring new pressures for overall coordination on the issue of European spatial planning. Issues concerning the revisions of the Structural Funds in 2000 and 2006, and funding opportunities for local authorities, are closely connected with the theme of this book. More important, it is expected that the link between funding and spatial policy in British planning will become more clearly defined during this period. The European dimension of British planning, in consequence, may grow significantly.

The authors tackle four key issues in their discussion of this topic:

- British political attitudes to Europeanisation issues
- The changing relationships between different arms of the state
- The often complex interdependences between tiers of governance
- The rapidly changing definition of British urban and regional planning

The European Dimension of British Planning presents a snapshot of the UK's relationship with Europe in terms of planning during the last years of the twentieth century. The core material is based on research gathered from six case-study local authorities in Britain and extensive interviews with central and local government officials.

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Richard H. Williams



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To our families
in gratitude for their constant support and encouragement
and to the memory of Richard H. Williams, d. 2001

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Preface

This book originated from collaboration between two academics interested in urban and regional planning, British governance and European institutions and politics. Mark Tewdwr-Jones's interests and on-going research work on the British planning system and Dick Williams's research on European spatial planning research formed the basis of a study that would eventually take two years to progress. Both authors had searched for a text that would provide students with an understanding of European influences on the British planning system but found little to assist their teaching. Work by Lyn Davies, Peter Roberts, Vince Nadin, Dave Shaw and Adrian Healy, all of whom are acknowledged experts in the field of European spatial planning, provided valuable points of reference but the authors were of the opinion that a more comprehensive and complete work was required that, first, assessed the diverse impacts of the European Union on British urban and regional planning and, second, proved that a significant European aspect of British planning does currently exist.

The gestation period for the production of *The European Dimension of British Planning* actually goes back many years. When Mark Tewdwr-Jones was commissioning chapters for *British Planning Policy in Transition* (1996), he asked Lyn Davies to produce a chapter that would discuss how the European Commission influences the British planning system. Lyn had recently completed a ground-breaking work for the Royal Town Planning Institute, *The Impact of the EC on Land Use Planning in the UK* (Davies *et al.* 1994), and seemed a natural choice for a chapter on planning and 'the European question'. Lyn obliged with a thorough but succinct account of planning and Europe but remarked that an in-depth examination of the various European influences on British planning would require a complete independent project in itself. That prompted Mark into thinking about research possibilities, but since he was involved with other research at the time his attention turned to the nuances of both the British statutory planning system and planning theory.

Dick Williams has long been recognised as an expert on European planning issues and has written many papers on the subject over the last ten years. Dick's seminal work *European Union Spatial Policy and Planning* (1996) had charted the development of the European remit over spatial planning and made a contribution to the task of mapping the trajectory of European influence on member states' planning systems. Mark had discussed research possibilities with Dick on the subject of planning and Europe as far back as 1996 but it was Mark's involvement in a government-sponsored research

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project that rekindled the flame. In 1996-8 Mark worked with Kevin Bishop of Cardiff University and David Wilkinson of the Institute for European Environmental Policy, London, on a study for the Department of the Environment (later DETR) entitled *The Impact of the EU on the UK Planning System* (DETR 1998d). Aspects of the work produced for this study became the subject of research Mark had discussed with Lyn Davies some years before, looking at the various UK impacts caused by the European Commission both on various levels of government and on the planning policy process.

Some of the research material gathered for the DETR project forms the basis of selective chapters in this book although these have been supplemented by research gathered since that time. In 1999 the DETR gave Mark Tewdwr-Jones permission to use some of the research material gathered for the project in this volume. The original task of research material collection in the field for the DETR project was undertaken by Mark Tewdwr-Jones, Kevin Bishop, David Wilkinson and several research assistants in 1996-7, and selective summaries of this material were published in the main government report in 1998 (DETR 1998d). Other elements of the research have been published under the names of the principal investigators (see, for example, Bishop *et al.* 2000; Tewdwr-Jones *et al.* 2000).

In 1998 Mark and Dick started to collaborate on a project to assess the European Union's influence on British planning in a more detailed way with the objective of publishing a book. Since the work commenced over two years ago, the potential impact of the European Commission and European measures on the British planning system has increased further as a result of a number of legal, political and economic factors. On occasions, while the book was being written, it became something of a challenge to pause the proceedings for the purpose of reflection and assessment. The development of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), formally agreed at Potsdam in May 1999, the EC Compendium of Spatial Planning Systems project, the reform of the Structural Funds, and the development of various Community Instruments intended to foster European integration or transnational cooperation on spatial planning, all refreshed the British planning agenda. This was at a time when the authors were attempting, academically, to consolidate the position. The change in ethos of the UK government towards Europe generally and European spatial planning in particular was also significant. The UK Planning Minister, Richard Caborn, firmly signed Britain up to the European Spatial Development Perspective in the summer of 1997 and declared that 'The European context for planning has been largely missing from the planning system in England . . . We fully recognise, therefore, that there needs to be a significant European dimension to our planning system' (DETR 1998b). Research from the DETR-commissioned study looking at the impact of the European Union on British planning had clearly identified lack of coherence in the way the European

Commission, and indeed European spatial policies and regional initiatives, were influencing the form, operation and context of the British planning system. This also appeared to have a significant geographical variation, not only between the constituent countries of Britain but also inter- and intra-regionally.

The European Dimension of British Planning is primarily a book authored from a British planning perspective, and illustrates how various EU policies, programmes, and legal instruments have affected the practice of planning in Britain and the work of central government and local planning authorities. This practice relates, for example, to opportunities for planning agencies to develop particular developmental projects, to participate in EU financial programmes, to frame economic development strategies within the context of the Structural Funds, and to take account of EC directives within development control work. The core material is based on research gathered from six case study local authorities in Britain and extensive interviews with central and local government officials. Some of the work gathered from the case studies occurred in the period 1996–7; in some instances this antedates changes in the British local government structure through reorganisation, devolution and regionalisation. In addition, significant changes have occurred in the EU context of planning practice, among which have been the reform of the Structural Funds and the development of the European Spatial Development Perspective. Despite this, the authors find the material of relevance in discussing wider relationships between British government agencies and the European Community.

With the context constantly evolving as a consequence of the changing political reaction towards Europe, the further development of European spatial planning initiatives, and the on-going use of European measures in professional planning practice, the authors have attempted to pin down the European dimension of British planning. The overall aim of this book, therefore, is to provide a research-informed textbook that will enable students, educators and practitioners to understand what the European context of British planning can mean in practice, and to enable planning practitioners and students to relate to the EU context in their own work. With respect to planning education, and for teaching purposes, the book is also the first textbook to respond to the Europeanisation issue in British planning. The work is intended to complement Williams (1996), by discussing European issues in British planning in more detail and by utilising practical examples from the actual experiences of local planning authorities. It also provides a broader perspective on European spatial policy than some other texts while concentrating firmly on the British planning system. The authors make no apologies for not attempting to provide a thoroughly rigorous conceptual text (it is, after all, devoted to assessing planning *practice*), although some deeper questions are revealed during the course of discussion. These include debates in relation to four key issues: the changing relationships between

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different arms of the state; British political attitudes towards Europeanisation issues; the interdependences and complexities flowing between tiers of governance; and the rapidly changing definition of British urban and regional planning itself. Many of these issues are raised in the research evidence throughout the book but are discussed at length in the two concluding chapters. The book's main purpose is to identify and present the European dimension of planning practice at the present time, with the caveat added that the European aspect of British urban and regional planning is a constantly shifting picture. The work presented here is therefore more of a snapshot of the position in the last years of the twentieth century. Inevitably, although the focus has been on practice over the last few years, the authors also discuss ways in which the European Union's spatial planning agenda is likely to influence the British planning system and the work of practising planners in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

The Blair government remains committed to the European dimension of planning practice, specifically to the European Spatial Development Perspective and the EC transnational programme INTERREG. It is recognised that devolution and regionalisation within the United Kingdom will bring new pressures for overall coordination, for which these factors are significant. Issues concerning the revisions of the Structural Funds in 2000 and 2006, and funding opportunities for local authorities, are closely connected with the theme of this book. More significantly, it is expected that the link between funding and spatial policy within British planning will become more explicit over this period. The European dimension of British planning, as a consequence, may grow significantly over the next few years.

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We are grateful to many professionals and academic colleagues for assistance in completing this book. In particular, we wish to extend our thanks to the many central government civil servants and local government officials who supplied information and generously gave their time. Among the scores of people we pestered over the last four years, we are especially grateful to John Zetter, Sean Ryan, Mike Cronin, Shona Dunn, Christabel Myers, Matthew Quinn, Jim Mackinnon, Diane Pearce, Adrian Haddon, Michael Bach, Don Harris, Kay Powell, Robin Thompson, Robert Upton, David Rose, Peter Roberts, and the many local authority officers for their time, interest and cooperation in the research. We would also like to express our gratitude to Kevin Bishop of Cardiff University and David Wilkinson of the Institute for European Environmental Policy, London, with whom Mark Tewdwr-Jones worked on the DETR study *The Impact of the EU on the UK Planning System* in 1996–8. Clare Coffey, Neil Emmott, Sally Mullard, Margot Poolman, Patrick McVeigh and Alison Clayton must also be acknowledged for their research support roles during this time.

Numerous academic colleagues have provided assistance, support and good friendship over the years. Special thanks are extended to Jeremy Alden for his encouragement, and to Sean White and Lorna Philip, all of whom understand only too well the pressures of completing research for DETR project deadlines. We are very grateful to Suzanne Speak, who acted as an assistant to Dick in Newcastle, and we both acknowledge the support and friendship of many colleagues at Newcastle and Aberdeen universities and University College London, especially Geoff Vigar and Patsy Healey. We are grateful to the DETR International Planning Division for permission to use research material but reiterate that the book is an independent study by ourselves and does not necessarily reflect government policy or the views of particular ministers.

Caroline Mallinder and her colleagues at Spon have been wonderful with their on-going support and for agreeing to publish the book in the first place.

Inevitably, parts of the book have been developed over a number of years and have been included within previously published work. The material included within Chapter 4 was originally prepared by David Wilkinson. Parts of Chapter 5 were published in *European Planning Studies* (8, 5, under the authorship of Tewdwr-Jones *et al.* 2000) and aspects of Chapter 12 were previously published in the *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management* (43, 3, under the authorship of Bishop *et al.* 2000). Some of the conceptual discussions in Chapter 13 were included in a book chapter

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authored by Mark Tewdwr-Jones and published by Ashgate (see Albrechts *et al.* 2001). We are grateful to Carfax Publishing and Ashgate for permission to use material from these papers.

M.T.-J.
R.H.W.

Postscript by Mark Tewdwr-Jones

When Dick was diagnosed with motor neurone disease in summer 1999 I did not at first appreciate the gravity of the situation. Both of us continued with the book and were determined to pursue it to completion. As the illness became more serious through 2000 I was happy to take on most of the writing, assisted by Dick's insightful comments and suggestions and Suzanne Speak's assistance in Newcastle with transcribing. The final part was completed over Christmas and New Year 2000/01, and I was able to deliver the manuscript to Spon in January. Dick died just five days later. Although he was not able to see a full copy, I know he was aware that the manuscript was complete and had been delivered to the publisher. I'm sure he would be pleased with the final version.

Dick's death is a tragic loss to higher education and to planning research. As one of the premier experts on European spatial planning research, Dick advanced knowledge of and interest in the subject among students, academics and practitioners throughout the European Union and beyond. I, for one, will miss his academic insight, his constant support and his dry sense of humour. I would like to dedicate the book to him, as a tribute to his immense contribution to planning research over the years, with thanks for many years of laughter and, above all, for being a close and dear friend.

Dr Richard Williams, 1945–2001

University of Newcastle upon Tyne 1975–2001

Dick Williams was one of the foremost scholars in Europe researching European spatial policy and planning. He tirelessly promoted a European perspective in spatial policy and planning. He was among the very first in Europe to recognise the significance of this area of policy, now widely acknowledged in planning research and practice throughout Europe. He became very active in developing AESOP (the Association of European Schools of Planning) and was its first Secretary General. In the 1990s, he played a key role in bringing together the UK research network which played an active role in what became the EU/member state-funded Europe-wide *Study Programme on European Spatial Planning* 1998–2000, and its proposed continuation. His expertise was regularly drawn upon by other national governments in Europe. During the 1990s, he was Visiting Chair at Aalborg University, a member of the Expert Group on Social Integration in Europe set up by the Austrian government, a member of the German Scientific Council for Building and Regional Planning, an evaluator for the Finnish Academy Urban Research Programme, and an adviser to the North Sea Region Spatial Vision Group. He played a key role for Newcastle University in developing its ERASMUS programme, acting as the university's first ERASMUS programme co-ordinator. He was the driving force behind the development of the teaching of European planning at Newcastle University, promoting exchanges of students. He was the architect of the Master of Town Planning (Europe) degree, building on an EU grant for the development of interrelated masters programmes within Europe on European Spatial Planning. His scholarly writings on Europe have become standard works of reference for students and academics alike, especially his major book, *European Spatial Policy and Planning* (1996, Paul Chapman). His corpus of work has become a key resource for researchers across the world interested in planning systems and land and property markets. He was working on the present book until incapacity from motor neurone disease defeated him.

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Abbreviations

CCC	Coalfield Communities Campaign
CEC	Commission of the European Communities
CET	Corporate European Team
CI	Community Instrument
CSD	Committee for Spatial Development
CTRL	Channel Tunnel Rail Link
DETR	Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions
DG	Directorate General
DOE	Department of the Environment
DOT	Department of Transport
EAGGF	European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantees Fund
EC	European Community
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EKEA	East Kent Energy Authority
EKI	East Kent Initiative
EMU	European Monetary Union
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESDP	European Spatial Development Perspective
ESF	European Social Fund
EU	European Union
FIFG	Financial Instrument for Fishery Guidance
IDO	Integrated Development Operation
MP	Member of Parliament
MPG	Minerals Planning Guidance Note
NBEIC	Northamptonshire Business and European Information Centre
NPCI	National Programme of Community Interest
NPPG	National Planning Policy Guideline
QMV	Qualified Majority Voting
PAN	Practice Advice Note
PMC	Programme Management Committee
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance Note
PPW	Planning Policy Wales
REP	Rural Environment Programme
RPG	Regional Planning Guidance
RRA	Remote Rural Area
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
RTPI	Royal Town Planning Institute
SAC	Special Area of Conservation

Abbreviations

SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEP	Strathclyde European Partnership
SIADP	Scottish Islands Agricultural Development Programme
SMCO	Syndicat Mixte de la Côte d’Opale
SME	Small and Medium Sized Enterprises
SODD	Scottish Office Development Department
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPD	Single Programming Document
SRC	Strathclyde Regional Council
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TEC	Training and Enterprise Company
TETN	Trans-European Transport Network
TIA	Territorial Impact Assessment
UK	United Kingdom
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WDA	Welsh Development Agency
WEC	Wales European Centre
WSOP	Western Scotland Operational Programme

1 Introduction

The European dimension of British planning

There are scores of academic books devoted to the subject of Europe. Over the last few years, almost every aspect of the geography, economics and politics of the European Union has been written about, and many of these texts have been from a British perspective. The proliferation of books studying the European phenomenon is testament to the many ways in which Europe, or to be more precise the European Community, referred to since 1992 as the European Union, is increasingly influencing – and is influenced by – domestic politics, globalisation and economic integration, together with a whole swathe of substantive policy problems ranging from transport and energy to pollution control, sustainability, and agriculture.

Among the more recent studies published have been works assessing the structure and operation of the European Community (Nugent 1997, 2000), the political development of modern Europe, including debate on political institutions (Keating 1999) and the impact of institutions on geography and trade (Chisholm 1995). These have complemented studies considering the impact of globalisation on the European territory (Keating and Loughlin 1997) and the advantages and disadvantages of economic integration and monetary union (Baimbridge *et al.* 1999), the latter remaining such a politically contested subject in the United Kingdom at least at the present time. Other authors have turned attention towards the territory of the European Union itself and the current and future membership of the European Community, including the proposed enlargement into Eastern Europe (Dabrowski and Rostowski 2000). Occupying another academic niche are texts focusing on regional policy, regional development and planning within Europe, and among these have been an examination of the relationship between member states and the development of a ‘Europe of the Regions’ (Jones and Keating 1995). This has been accompanied by studies looking at the push towards further regionalism in Western Europe (Keating 2000) which is, in itself, occurring simultaneously with processes creating further

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devolution and decentralisation in member states (Bradbury and Mawson 1997) which in turn have concomitant impacts on the political and governmental institutions of Europe (Albrechts *et al.* 2001).

Geographers, urban and regional planners and political scientists have concentrated on detailed aspects of European regional policy, including the impact of Europe on forms of regional governance working (Albrechts *et al.* 1998), the evolving relationships between tiers of governance (Balchin *et al.* 1999), the patterns of regional development and partnership processes across Europe (Alden and Boland 1996; Halkier and Danson 1999), and the relationship between regional development and spatial planning (Shaw *et al.* 2000). Within particular substantive policy sectors, studies have focused on aspects of, for example, European transport policy and networks (Banister *et al.* 1995; Ackerman *et al.* 2000), on the economic impacts of regional policy and Structural Funds within member states (Batchler and Turok 1997), and on the workings and effects of European policies devoted to agriculture (Grant 1997) and fisheries (Gray 1998). Nearer to the subject of urban and regional planning and the desire to create sustainable developments, authors have also addressed the subject of European environmental and energy policy (Matlary 1997; Zito 1999), and the relationship between sustainable development and spatial planning policy (Nadin *et al.* forthcoming). Urban planning in Europe itself has been the subject of relatively few critiques to date. Among the books published in the last few years have been work on the development of European spatial policy and planning (Williams 1996) and a study of the history of urban planning across Europe since 1945 (Albers *et al.* forthcoming). More detailed studies have included a review of the variety of planning systems and processes of member states within Europe (Davies *et al.* 1989; Newman and Thornley 1996), appraisal of property markets and urban development in European cities (Berry and McGreal 1994), and discussions devoted to critiquing the development and form of spatial development strategies (Healey *et al.* 1997). This excludes the numerous books that concentrate on urban form, place-making and the urban politics of individual European cities (for example, Agnew 1995 on Rome, Noin and White 1997 on Paris, Hebbert 1998 on London and McNeill 1999 on Barcelona), in addition to studies that focus on the variation in approaches between European countries to particular issues (see, for example, Gallent and Tewdwr-Jones 2000 on European approaches and policies toward rural second homes).

The European Dimension of British Planning is a book focusing on yet another aspect of the European debate. It is fundamentally about the practice of urban and regional planning in one European member state: Britain. Although its context is the operation and policies of British planning, its focus is on the way in which Europe impacts on the British planning system. In addition to the wide range of national policy and legislation that traditionally govern planning practice within a country, directly or indirectly

(Tewdwr-Jones 1996), there is also a large body of European policy that plays a similar role. And whilst it remains the case that the European Union legally has no formal powers over the planning system of Britain or any other member state (DETR 1999), it nevertheless exerts a major influence in very many ways (Davies *et al.* 1994; Davies 1996). The most immediately apparent examples come through environmental regulations, funding programmes and regional policies that impact on spatial planning policy and decision making. Although many people in local planning authorities recognise the truth of this in their everyday work, there are many others who find difficulty in making the connection between the very local focus of much of planning practice and the wider European context from which initiatives, projects and funding for individual developments may have originated.

The objective of this book, therefore, is to help the reader make the connection between British planning and Europe by profiling, in some detail, a set of case studies illustrating the variety of ways in which a number of local planning authorities within one member state have responded to the European context. The core material for the book is based upon a research project undertaken in 1996–8 (DETR 1998d). The two principal questions utilised for this project and which can be repeated here are:

- How do the British planning policy tools at the national, regional and local levels, and within development control processes, take account of or are influenced by European measures?
- How is the British planning system used in relation to the various European financial initiatives that exist?

Some changes have taken place at the EU level since the research was carried out, but the chapters nevertheless offer a detailed insight into the ways in which planning authorities respond to the EU context and this does have continuing validity.

During the early to mid-1990s when this research was carried out, the Conservative government had very clear and public political uncertainties about Europe (see, for example, Redwood 1997), leading to a significant anti-European stance within certain sections of British politics and government (Evans 1999; Kaiser 1999). In particular, the government was concerned about the impact of legislative measures (directives and regulations) on the freedom of British local planning authorities to exercise discretion and consider development proposals on their merits. This reflected the prevailing government attitude of intense suspicion of EU initiatives that affected all sectors of policy making, and one that may have contributed to the Conservatives' electoral defeat in May 1997 (Gowland and Turner 1999). From the point of view of many local authorities, however, especially in the economically disadvantaged parts of Britain, the real significance of the

Introduction

European Union lies in its potential for maximising the benefits that can be obtained from funding programmes (Roberts 1997a). Following the change of government in 1997, a more positive attitude towards the European Union prevailed across the board. As far as urban and regional planning was concerned, the newly appointed Minister of State, Richard Caborn MP, was a particularly notable Euro-enthusiast. A key theme of his discussion document *Modernising Planning* (DETR 1998b) was enhancement of the European dimension of planning and the adoption of a Continental concept of 'spatial planning' as a means of developing a more complete policy framework.

As far as possible, the whole range of impacts on planning practice are explained and illustrated in this book. Some of the case studies will demonstrate ways in which EU environmental legislation restricts the freedom of local planning authorities to exercise discretion, while others show the way that local planning policy may be framed in order to support the case for Structural Fund assistance. In the time that has elapsed since the Blair government was first elected a number of significant developments have taken place in EU spatial policy. The key features are outlined here, but the discussion of their significance for British planning forms the theme of Chapter 2. A framework document for the spatial development of the European Union as a whole, the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), has been prepared under the auspices of the Committee on Spatial Development. The complete Spatial Development Perspective is now available, having been adopted by ministers at the Potsdam Informal Council in May 1999 (CSD 1999). The Perspective may be regarded as a planners' document, in the sense that it is the product of close collaboration between the various national government departments responsible for urban and regional planning and their expert advisers (Faludi 2000; Williams 2000). The policy context in which planning operates is also framed by a document of much wider political significance for the whole future of the European Union, namely *Agenda 2000* (CEC 1997a). *Agenda 2000* sets out proposals for the reform of the Structural Funds for the period 2000–6 and for the accommodation of the anticipated enlargement of the European Union. As part of the package of Structural Funds, the number of Community Instruments (CIs) has been substantially reduced from the wide range available during the period of the research. For the 2000–6 period there are only four. One is central to spatial planning (INTERREG), two are concerned with urban and rural development respectively (URBAN and LEADER), and one is concerned with social inclusion (EQUAL). Thus all these may be of interest to local planning authorities. In the research reported in the case study profile chapters, several examples occur of the use of Community Instruments. Although the actual instrument then available may no longer exist, the nature of the funding partnership between the local authority and the European Commission continues in much the same way.

Definitions, institutions and contexts

As a preliminary context to the main body of the book, it may be helpful to the reader to discuss some definitions and the role of certain institutions that will be regularly referred to. A very simple introductory guide to the main EU institutions that are of significance for local planning authorities is therefore given here. For a fuller account that is also specific to planning the reader is referred to Williams (1996: chapter 3), and there are of course several other political science textbooks that could be referred to, for example Nugent (1997, 2000).

The main institution that local or regional planners are likely to encounter is the European Commission. This is the secretariat of the European Union and is sometimes spoken of as if it is an enormous sprawling bureaucracy. In fact it is a relatively small institution, employing fewer people than a medium-size UK local authority. It is under the overall direction of the members of the Commission. At present the Commission has twenty members, two from each of the large countries and one from the smaller member states. It is divided into a number of Directorates General (DGs), each responsible for a particular sector of EU policy making, rather like national government departments. The directorates of greatest concern to planning are relatively small compared with those concerned with issues such as competition policy or agriculture. The Directorate General for regional policy, known since 1999 as DG REGIO (formerly DG XVI), is the one most likely to be an immediate point of contact for local authorities as it administers the Structural Funds and other funding programmes of concern to planning including those targeted specifically at urban policy issues.

The European Union has had a regional policy since 1975. The agreement on this was an outcome of the enlargement negotiations that led to the accession of the United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark in 1973. The first commissioner responsible for regional policy was one of the first UK commissioners, the former Labour minister George Thompson. Regional policy has undergone many changes since those days. The initial funding programmes were approved only on a temporary basis and were little more than budget transfer mechanisms. It became formalised under the EU Treaties with the passage of the Single European Act of 1986. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the main policy instrument of regional policy, is now considered as one of three Structural Funds, the others being the European Social Fund (ESF) and the guidance section of the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF). Since 1989 there has been a policy of integrating all forms of regional aid within a common framework for the coordination of the Structural Funds on the basis of a set of overall objectives.

The other Directorate General of particular relevance is that responsible for EU environment policy (formerly DG XVI). This directorate has been

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responsible for many of the proposals leading to legislation whose operation is discussed in the case studies below. During the 1990s EU environment policy was largely pursued through legislation and this was, from time to time, the cause of difficulty for the British government, as it was for other governments. It should be noted that, under the provisions of the Treaty of Rome, EU legislation is always superior in law to national member state legislation. Environment policy was not part of the original Treaty of Rome on which the European Union was founded. The agreement to originate it dates back to a meeting of heads of government in 1972 which happened also to be the first attended by a UK Prime Minister in anticipation of UK accession on 1 January 1973. It initially proceeded under general provisions of the treaty, which required unanimity. As with regional policy, a specific legal competence was created in the Single European Act of 1986 which added an environment title to the original treaty.

The role of the European Commission is to propose policy measures that implement the objectives agreed in the treaties, and to monitor existing policies. However, no proposal can enter into force until it has been adopted by the Council of Ministers. A council exists for every sector of policy making over which the European Union has powers granted in the treaties. Its members consist of the appropriate minister from each member state. After presentation of a proposal from the Commission, the Council is required to take into account the views of other EU institutions and national governments, and may be involved in complex negotiations. However, every piece of European legislation must be enacted by the Council, either by unanimity (i.e. member states have a veto) or by qualified majority voting (QMV). European Union environment legislation has been the product of both systems. Funding programmes such as the European Regional Development Fund do not require Council votes for individual proposals, although the basic regulations must of course go through this approval procedure.

Before the Council of Ministers can enact legislation, extensive consultations are always undertaken with member state governments, and the opinions of the European Parliament, Committee of the Regions and Economic and Social Committee must normally be obtained. Parliament has had, since the 1992 Maastricht Treaty, a role in the legislative process alongside that of national ministers. The Committee of the Regions consists of politicians elected to local and regional authorities who are nominated by their national government. In fields such as spatial planning its expertise is quite considerable, and therefore its opinion is often very influential. The Economic and Social Committee, consisting of nominated representatives of employers, trades unions and independent professionals, may also be asked to offer an opinion but in the planning field this is of less significance. A fuller explanation of the role of these bodies in the EU legislative process is to be found in Williams (1996).

From planning to spatial planning

European Union interest in planning at the present time remains confined to particular substantive areas, such as the Structural Funds, regional policy and environmental policy, which possess either a direct or indirect bearing on 'planning'. Directives have a direct impact and are required to be transposed into domestic legislation of member states; policy mechanisms may be written into the planning policies of each member state – at national or sub-national/regional levels – but these are dependent on political will for their inclusion. This distinction strikes to the very heart of the notion about how one defines planning and how planning itself as a governmental activity is kaleidoscopic. More fundamentally, it questions how planning should be 'ring-fenced' and what components of the definition should be included and excluded. How planning is viewed, defined and operationalised will be different between different member states. The distinction between a strict, narrow land use regulation definition and a broader contextual definition incorporating substantive policy areas could parallel the use of the terms 'planning' and 'spatial planning'.

The term 'spatial planning' has come into widespread use only since the latter 1990s in Britain, partly as a consequence of Europe and partly as a result of academic writing (see, for example, Healey *et al.* 1997; Vigar *et al.* 2000). It is a direct translation of German and Dutch planning terminology (*Raumordnung*, *ruijmtelijke planning*) and an approximate translation of the French *aménagement du territoire*. It is used to emphasise the difference between the traditional British approach to town and country planning and the underlying concepts of planning that have been developed in these three countries. The essence of spatial planning is that it is concerned with the location of both physical structures and activities within the territory of the jurisdiction to which it is applied. Spatial planning can operate at any spatial scale from that of a neighbourhood to that of the European Union as a whole. For this reason it is preferable to the term 'regional planning', which is also occasionally used as a translation of the words quoted above. Another essential feature of spatial planning is that it aims to provide coherence and coordination of policy making for the variety of authorities and agencies that may need to take spatial decisions, and provide guidance and greater certainty for private sector developers.

The spatial planning phrase means different things to different member states in the context of the variety of planning systems that exist across Europe (Newman and Thornley 1996), and the European Commission has drawn attention to the confusing array of different terms employed across the territory to describe particular combinations of government activities designed to influence the use of space (Nadin and Shaw 1997). The Commission's preferred use of the term 'spatial planning' as a neutral, umbrella term is an attempt to embrace all the different national approaches

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to the management and coordination of spatial development without being specific (or even biased) to any one of them. Spatial planning should therefore be viewed as referring to a range of public organisations, policy mechanisms and institutional processes at various tiers of government and administration that, together, influence the future allocation and use of space. It would include the following activities (DETR 1998d), many of which overlap:

- Urban and regional economic development.
- Measures to influence the population balance between urban and rural areas.
- The planning of transport and other communications infrastructures.
- The protection of habitats, landscapes and particular natural resources.
- The detailed regulation of the development and use of land and property.
- Measures to coordinate the spatial impacts of other sectoral policies.

Spatial planning is therefore a useful term, since it can be much broader than the planning terminology, even planning systems, utilised in single member states. In relation to Britain, for example, the ‘town and country planning’ term is a particularly narrow phrase that describes in essence the statutory planning process of development control and development plan preparation. But this is just one aspect of what planning is and what purpose it serves, and does not adequately address broader questions that planning is expected to be concerned with (Tewdwr-Jones 1999b, c). A broader phrase possesses the ability to consider wider social, economic, environmental and cultural issues, many of which are often problematic in attempts to take them into account within the narrow legal definition. It also demonstrates that planning is not simply an activity undertaken by national and sub-national and regional governments. Increasingly in European and member states’ systems of governance, urban and regional planning involves a wide range of public and private actors and organisations that, together, perform, mediate within and collaborate for the planning function. The employment of the term ‘spatial planning’ is therefore potentially significant not only for individual member states, but also for the purpose of encompassing the changing perception of what planning is and what role it can perform in governance, within the polity, within regions, and within communities.

Approach to the research

For those interested in assessing how to research European influence on a member state’s policies and legislation, we outline here the principal methodological issues involved in our work.

The research was conducted in three principal stages. First, a desk study review was undertaken of a broad range of EU measures across all policy

sectors to identify those with a significant actual or potential impact on urban and regional planning in Britain, and the nature of that impact. Second, the extent to which such EU measures have influenced national and regional planning policy in Britain was established through a review of British national and regional planning guidance, and interviews with relevant government officials. Third, at local level, interviews with planning officers and other relevant staff in local authorities in selected case study areas were conducted to establish the impact of the European Union on urban and regional planning on the local scale. The research during each of these stages is described in more detail below.

Scoping review of EU measures

A desk study review of a large number of EU measures and other initiatives was undertaken to identify those whose impact on the British planning system seemed to be actually or potentially significant. The review covered current and proposed legislation, financial instruments, demonstration programmes, analytical frameworks and other relevant policy initiatives in the following policy sectors, which may be defined as explicit EU interventions in spatial planning:

- Environmental legislation.
- Climate change and energy policy.
- Transport and Trans-European Networks.
- The Common Agricultural Policy.
- The Common Fisheries Policy.
- The EU Structural Funds.
- Tourism.

Over fifty EU measures or initiatives were identified as being actually or potentially important for British urban and regional planning. (These are discussed further in Chapter 2.) The key features of each of these measures were described in a ‘fiche’, and their potential impact on the five broad types of planning activity was analysed. In a number of cases the analysis was informed by interviews with relevant European Commission officials for clarification.

Review of the impact of the European Union on British national and regional planning

A desk-based review of all British planning policy guidance documents was undertaken in order to identify the extent to which they reflected relevant EU legislation or initiatives. The analysis concentrated specifically on Planning

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Policy Guidance for England (PPGs), Regional Planning Guidance for England (RPGs), National Planning Policy Guidelines for Scotland (NPPGs), and Planning Policy Guidance for Wales (PPW). This desk study was supplemented by an in-depth examination of six case study documents, by means of interviews with government officials responsible for the drafting of the policy notes. The six case study documents were selected on the basis that the European Union has well developed legislation or other policy initiatives in the areas covered by the documents. The six case studies were:

- PPG 9 Nature Conservation (October 1994).
- PPG 13 Transport (March 1994).
- PPG 20 Coastal Planning (September 1992).
- PPG 23 Planning and Pollution Control (July 1994).
- RPG 7 Regional Planning Guidance for the Northern Region (September 1993).
- NPPG 2 Business and Industry (September 1993).

Interviews with local authority planning and other officials

Local authorities or former local authority areas in Britain were identified as case studies. These were selected variously to reflect one or more of the following criteria:

- Representation of England, Scotland and Wales.
- Representation of different land use types: urban, rural and maritime.
- Eligibility or otherwise for assistance from the Structural Funds.
- Participation in EU cross-border initiatives such as INTERREG or INTERREG IIC.
- Inclusion of designated Trans-European Road Networks.
- Representation of different types of local authority structures.

It was decided eventually to select six case studies in Britain: two counties and one district in England, two counties in Wales and one region in Scotland. Development plans and other documents were examined, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with planning, European and other senior officers in an attempt to identify the extent of EU influences on local planning activities and structures.

Identifying the impact of the European Union: methodological issues

Tracing the influence of the European Union on the urban and regional planning system of any member state is not a straightforward exercise. Among the range of difficulties established were clearly identifying when influence has occurred, the problems in establishing the true direction of causation, and the definition between Europe and the member state of ‘planning’, which in Britain is narrow in statute but considerably wider in practice.

Identifying influence

The effect in Britain of an EU measure or initiative may sometimes be difficult to discern. Its influence may be gradual and long-term, and/or may not be explicitly recognised by British practitioners. The problem varies with different categories of policy instrument: for example, it is normally easier to identify the impact of EU legislation, although even here EU influences may be obscured. When EU legislation takes the form of a directive, it does not apply to the United Kingdom directly but is transposed into domestic UK law (either in the form of new primary legislation, or more usually through statutory instruments). It is this domestic legislation that local authorities are required to apply, and its European origins over time may be obscured or forgotten. For example, with thirty-four British implementing regulations and twenty-seven guidance documents issued since 1988, the practice of environmental assessment has become so embedded in the British planning system that it is easy to forget its parenthood in the European Commission’s Environmental Impact Assessment Directive 85/337.

Tracing the influence of non-legislative EU initiatives can be more problematic. For example, since the publication in 1990 of the Green Paper on the Urban Environment, EU activity in the field of urban policy has been non-legislative. The work of the Sustainable Cities Expert Group has been disseminated to planners across the European Union through ‘good practice’ guides and two international Sustainable Cities conferences. Ideas generated through this process during the 1990s have been absorbed – often imperceptibly – into approaches to urban and regional planning in Britain.

The direction of causation

A further difficulty in identifying the extent of the impact of the European Union on a member state’s planning system is to establish precisely who has influenced whom. Where the European Union and member states share legal competence in particular sectors (as they do in respect of environmental or regional policy), national and EU policy measures may often be developed in parallel, and may influence each other during the course of often protracted

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negotiations in the Council of Ministers. Member states may sometimes (quite legitimately) claim that a new EU measure is based on existing domestic policy, and that the European Union has therefore had no distinct impact at all. This claim is easy to argue when domestic legislation precedes in time similar EU legislation on the same subject. However, even in this instance the direction of causation may not be clear, since domestic legislation may in fact anticipate known future EU requirements.

The boundaries of planning

These general difficulties are compounded by specific characteristics of the planning system in the United Kingdom. These centre on three issues:

- *The ambiguity surrounding the meaning of planning.* In legislative terms British planning is narrowly defined as the use and development of land. However, the policy interpretation of planning is far wider than that, in terms of the tasks set and the issues that must be considered when developing local planning policies. The English planning guidance note PPG 1 *General Policy and Principles* of February 1997 (DOE 1997), for example, emphasised the central contribution of the planning system to achieving sustainable development, a concept which has implications for a wide range of different policy areas. Similarly, the policy note PPG 12 *Development Plans* of February 1992 (DOE 1992b) lists many topics on which policies should be included in development plans, among which are a variety of social, economic and environmental objectives.
- *The proliferation of wider spatial and environmental policies and plans* outside the narrow planning system. These now include, for example, national and local air quality strategies and plans; Environment Agency local environmental action plans; and Single Programming Documents setting the framework for assistance from the EU Structural Funds. These plans may be derived from, or influenced by, EU requirements, and may in turn influence the content of development plans as a result of statutory consultation. Moreover, officials in local authority planning departments may themselves become involved in the development of such plans and strategies.
- *The blurring of the boundaries of planning.* This has in some local authorities been given formal expression in the deliberate amalgamation of planning functions into multi-professional programme areas. For example, in one unitary authority, responsibility for planning and transport has been combined with economic development, tourism, highways, estate management and European issues in a 'Development Services Programme Area'. Against this background, it is sometimes difficult to unravel the precise effect of the European Union on urban and regional planning as distinct from other sectors with which it is closely

integrated, and the hierarchical nature of the statutory planning system presents opportunities for EU influence at a variety of levels.

Structure of the book

The book follows the following structure. This introductory chapter has set out the context in which the original research was carried out. This includes a brief outline of the developments in EU spatial planning that have taken place up to the time of writing and discusses some of the key definitions and concepts that the reader will need to understand. The chapter also introduced the term 'spatial planning' and raised methodological difficulties encountered in assessing and charting the influence of one political institution on another. Chapter 2 discusses in more detail the ways in which the EU policy and spatial planning context has developed, concentrating especially on the period since the mid-1990s. This discussion includes outlining the history of the European Union's remit on planning issues and the emergence of EC initiatives that are having some impact on member states' planning systems. Chapter 3 continues the discussion of the emergence of European spatial planning by concentrating specifically on the European Spatial Development Perspective, which provides a new and robust context for European spatial planning and for a European dimension to British planning. Chapters 2 and 3 establish the development of the European Union's remit in relation to planning. Chapter 4, by comparison, sets out the key EC measures that potentially impact upon the planning system of each member state. Key European directives and initiatives are highlighted, and once again a distinction is made between planning as a narrow land use only concept and the broader social, economic and environmental issues that planning exists to cater for. These chapters are designed to highlight issues that are illustrated in the case studies, later in the book, and are intended to bring the reader up to date with the important recent developments in European spatial planning.

Chapter 5 introduces the reader to the research section of the book, and commences with discussion of the British national and regional planning policy context. As with so many other fields of activity subject to EU influence, the conflicting attitudes towards further European integration have an impact on the degree of welcome or resistance with which EU planning initiatives are received. This is illustrated generally in relation to Britain, the three constituent countries of England, Scotland and Wales, and in respect of key substantive policy sectors. The subsequent chapters (6–11) are each based on one of the case studies of individual local planning authorities undertaken as part of the local research study. The selection includes Scottish and Welsh authorities, provincial districts and shire counties. It should be noted that the case studies were undertaken either prior to or during the reorganisation of local government in Wales and Scotland and certain parts of England in the mid-1990s. (See Harris and Tewdwr-Jones 1995 on Wales, Clotworthy

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and Harris 1996 on England and Hayton 1996 on Scotland for context.) Chapter 12 draws together all the lessons from the case studies and sets them in the context of discussion of more general and conceptual issues in Chapter 13 concerning the European and British spatial planning policy agenda in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

PART I

The European context

2 The development of a European context for spatial planning

The planning map of Europe has changed significantly over the last twenty years (Davies 1996). The increasing interest of the European Union in spatial planning matters (Williams 1996) and a move towards enhanced inter-member state and interregional cooperation (Church and Reid 1999; Keating 2000) and integration (Weidenfels and Wessels 1997) have reoriented planning. The changing political and institutional contexts at the European, member state, sub-national and local levels of governance – including devolution and decentralisation – have all impacted upon how planning is viewed and what role it performs in the twenty-first century (Albrechts *et al.* 2001). These changes, and the rapidity with which they have occurred, can appear confusing, complex and kaleidoscopic (Tewdwr-Jones 2001a). Additional changes have occurred in the nature, definition, purpose and remit of planning within different European member states (Newman and Thornley 1996), on different spatial scales (MacLeod and Goodwin 1999), often as a consequence of the transformation of Western governance and its reaction to globalisation (Jessop 1997). The emergence of governance, environmentalism, public–private partnerships, enhanced community and participatory processes and the global economy, meanwhile, further confuses an already complex picture (Healey 1997).

What we know today as planning bears little resemblance to the same activity that existed just twenty years ago, not only across Europe but also in different European countries (Tewdwr-Jones 1999a). The British planning system, for example, that was intended to facilitate development, regulate land use, and differentiate between the urban and the rural, has been completely overhauled or ‘modernised’ as a result of higher political, economic and environmental expectations (Allmendinger and Tewdwr-Jones 2000a; Hull 2000). A complex and on-going process of political and institutional

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restructuring at the urban and regional scale (Tewdwr-Jones and McNeill 2000), changing forces both within and outside Europe and member states (Eser and Konstadakopoulos 2000), and the demands and expectations of a never-ending number of agencies, stakeholders, public groups, individuals and governments – all of whom are ‘contesting governance’ (Jewson and MacGregor 1997) – have bombarded planning sectorally, territorially and politically (Vigar and Healey 1999). The pace of change has been just as noticeable. Associated with the new demands on planning and its delivery, professional planners and educators have had to adapt to the new demands, new knowledge and new skills required, to ensure that planning retains its place in governance and has some credence in the on-going web of change and complexity (Evans 1995; Vigar *et al.* 2000).

In this chapter we assess how planning has emerged as a pan-European activity, by considering the history of the European Union’s approach or attitude to urban and regional planning. This will include discussion of the development of particular EC initiatives that form a European spatial planning ‘system’ on the one hand and are impacting upon the planning systems of member states on the other. We show that European interest in planning issues has increased markedly over the last ten years, and this appears to be increasing at a frenetic pace since the emergence of the INTERREG initiative. The development of the European Spatial Development Perspective, following the release of *Agenda 2000*, equally caustic for the future of European member states’ planning policies, is a matter discussed in Chapter 3. For the moment, this chapter will serve as a useful context to the research issues raised in the empirical chapters later in the book.

The European context

The European Union’s interest in what has become known as ‘spatial planning’ matters has increased significantly over the last twenty years or so (Fit and Kragt 1994; Giannakourou 1996; Kunzmann 1996, 1998; Roberts 1997b; Williams 1996). For the most part, the European Union has not been able to intervene directly in statutory planning in member states, mainly as a consequence of the lack of legitimacy it is accorded in relation to planning matters; the impact has rather been felt indirectly. For example, a large number of EU spatial planning initiatives have had a significant indirect impact on the operation of each country’s planning process. These include policies toward transnational cooperation, Structural Funds, the Common Agricultural Policy, the Common Fisheries Policy, transport policy, and environmental and energy policy. Even though many of these topics comprise nationally and regionally subject areas warranting national government intervention, different member states have varied in their attitude to including EU issues within the context of their planning policy-making functions. More significantly, in some cases the EU dimension has also been largely

absent from national and regional planning policy documents, since the degree of acceptance of a European context of spatial planning policies in each country has rested on political will (see, for example, Tewdwr-Jones *et al.*'s (2000) discussion of the United Kingdom). Despite this policy vacuum at the national level of government, aspects of European policy have nevertheless been present as an important context in the formulation and development of planning strategies at the local and regional levels, both in Britain (Williams, 1996; Bishop *et al.*, 2000) and across member states (see, for example, Wise's 2000 discussion of regional attitudes towards the European Union's 'Atlantic Arc' amalgam of local and regional governments). The last forty years shows how the European Union has steadily increased its attention to spatial planning issues even if it was originally intended for such a matter to rest primarily with member states.

The Treaty of Rome of 1957 establishing the European Economic Community contained no reference to planning, and neither the European Commission nor the Council of Ministers possessed any mandate over planning matters. It was not until the passing of the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, 'The Treaty on European Union', that explicit references to 'town and country planning' and 'land use' were made, and included within Article 130, s. 2. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to comprehensively debate the European Union's mandate in relation to planning (see Williams 1996 for a comprehensive discussion), other than to note that Article 130, s. 2. is problematic on two counts. First, it could be argued that it was inappropriate to include references to town and country planning within this part of the treaty that was intended to deal with environmental issues. Second, it restricted town and country planning to unanimous voting of the member states and therefore any future decision relating to planning could be subject to the national veto of a particular country. Further reference was made restricting planning to an area of government where legislation might be agreed by the ministers of the member states rather than by qualified majority voting.

Research undertaken by Davies *et al.* (1994) and by Nadin and Shaw (1997) identifies a number of distinct periods over the last fifty years in the relationship between the European Union and the United Kingdom which reflects the approach and experience of other member states. The first phase, between 1945 and the early 1970s, represents in planning terms a period of member states operating in isolation from the rest of Europe. Planners operated discretionary or zoning systems, based either on professional judgement or on blueprint plans for future planning regulatory purposes (see Davies *et al.* 1989). The second phase, between member states joining the European Economic Community and the late 1980s, represents growing awareness of the transnational nature of both economic and environmental issues, and signifies the start of a trend towards increasing interest rather than direct involvement in planning matters broadly defined.

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The third phase, from the passing of the Single European Act of 1986, marked a reactive phase with a 'broader-based involvement in Europe for the planning profession' (Davies *et al.* 1994: 99) with increasing awareness among planners in each member state about the operation of the European Community. This was especially noticeable at the local government level, where planners started to develop an interest in fostering links and exchanges with Brussels, through the appointment (for example) of European Liaison Officers. The fourth phase, after the publication of *Europe 2000* in 1991, marks a new interest in spatial planning issues. The introduction of EU environmental initiatives and Structural Fund allocation has been accompanied by the emergence of planning as a pan-European activity (Buunk *et al.* 1999).

The last ten years or so have witnessed a significant number of developments that have taken place in EU spatial policy development. At the 1989 Leipzig meeting of Planning Ministers, a decision was taken for member states to work together informally on the future of European spatial planning issues. This marked the commencement of, to some degree, a new legitimate role for EU planning activity that had a direct impact upon other tiers of government and governance across Europe and within each member state. The Leipzig agreement contributed to the development of two important EU instruments: INTERREG and Trans-European Transport Networks. It also assisted in the development of the Compendium project (Shaw *et al.* 1995; CEC 1997c; Nadin and Shaw 1997) that attempted to provide an overview of planning in each of the member states. In 1991 the Committee on Spatial Development (CSD) was formed (Faludi *et al.* 2000). It comprises senior officials from member states to foster this inter-member state collaboration, leading to the development of what Williams (2000) has referred to as a classic example of European governance by committee.

The European interest in planning therefore has a fairly recent history even if the scale of interest and its development have rested on informality and agreements to work together. Despite this cooperative arrangement, which one might even call 'formal informality' (Tewdwr-Jones 2001a), the impact of informal EU activity in spatial planning has been almost as significant as that that might have existed if the European Union had been awarded formal planning powers. The effect has been noticeable on two levels: at the member state level, for the most part only in terms of providing the political will and legitimacy to enter EU discussions; and, at sub-national level, in the development of planning policies, financing and resourcing of projects, fostering interregional cooperation, and in ensuring policy implementation. Member states have therefore relied on sub-national levels of governance to ensure that planning has delivered substantively even if the decision to enter into cooperation with other member states has occurred in principle at the national level. The next section discusses some European spatial planning initiatives in more detail.

The development of EU spatial policy and planning

The section has two main objectives. First, it outlines the EU policy context as it has developed through the 1990s, in order to remind the reader of the background to the operations of the various local planning authorities discussed in the research section, later in the book. Second, it brings the story up to date by identifying the main policy developments in the period from the mid-1990s to the beginning of the operations of the post-2000 funding period.

The development of EU spatial policy has progressed significantly since the mid-1990s. At that time, the *Europe 2000+* report (CEC 1994) had recently been published, and the INTERREG IIC transnational planning programmes were getting under way (Nadin and Shaw 1998). However, the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) had not yet reached draft publication stage, proposals for a continuing spatial planning study programme were in their infancy, and the *Agenda 2000* proposals for the post-2000 period had not been published. The latter is concerned both with Structural Funding and with one of the two dominant issues of the post-2000 political agenda, namely EC enlargement, with which the future of Structural Funding is intimately connected. The other overarching political issue is, of course, European Monetary Union (EMU), which is also of significance for the future of the Structural Funds.

The 1990s saw a very substantial development of EU spatial policy. There were a number of significant initiatives by the European Commission, and it was also a period during which local planning authorities became increasingly responsive to the European context of their policies. The decade culminated in the adoption of the European Spatial Development Perspective at the Potsdam meeting of ministers in May 1999 (see Chapter 3). The context in which EU spatial policy is likely to develop in the next decade will build upon the Spatial Development Perspective and the Action Programme subsequently agreed in October 1999, within the framework of the revision of the Structural Funds for the funding period 2000–6. The 1990s phase of policy development did build on work undertaken during the 1980s, notably by the Council of Europe, but it was also a decade of considerable significance in respect of EU environment policy (Lowe and Ward 1998), and for extending EU Treaty competences in key policy sectors for planning (Ward and Williams 1997). During the 1980s quite substantial additions to the body of EU environment legislation were adopted of spatial significance (notably directives concerning habitats, birds and bathing waters) and, of course, the 1985 Environmental Assessment Directive, which was the first and most explicit example of EU legislation directly impacting on the operation of the planning legislation in Britain. European Union environment policy has largely developed independently of spatial policy, particularly since the 1990 Green Paper on the Urban Environment initiative was sidelined. It has been

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driven largely by legislative measures, several of which have, from time to time, caused difficulties for UK governments. There has, from the later 1990s, been a move away from policy making through legislation and towards the development of mutual support initiatives and incentives. The key element of the latter, the LIFE initiative, is a financial instrument potentially of as much significance for planning as the URBAN and INTERREG community initiatives.

The development of most fundamental significance for spatial planning during the 1980s was the adoption of the Single European Act. When this entered into force in 1986 it amended the treaties by adding both an environment title and a competence over regional policy. Up to that date legislation in either policy field could be based only on the general treaty provisions, which required unanimity in the Council of Ministers. Regional policy had been strictly based on temporary agreements and could therefore be ended at any time. In many respects, for the core functions of local planning authorities, the Single European Act is of greater significance than the Maastricht Treaty, although the latter did actually add 'town and country planning' to the environment title (Williams 1996: 58).

Following the Single European Act, a significant step towards an EU spatial policy framework was taken with the agreement in 1988 on the coordination of the Structural Funds. This agreement was based on the concept of common overall objectives. Certain objectives were spatially targeted while others had more social objectives and applied throughout the EU territory (see Table 2.1). As Table 2.1 indicates, five key objectives were identified. Objectives 1, 2 and 5b refer to specific geographical areas and Objectives 3 and 4 refer to groups in need.

Table 2.1 Structural Fund objectives after 1989

1	To promote the development and adjustment of regions whose development is lagging behind
2	To support areas undergoing industrial conversion, whose percentage share of industrial employment and average rate of unemployment both exceed the EU average
3	To cover long-term unemployment
4	To cover vocational training for young people
5b	To support rural areas in need of economic diversification, which are dependent on extremely vulnerable agricultural activities

Regions covered by Objective 1 are those whose *per capita* gross domestic product (GDP) is less than 75 per cent of the EU average, and these included Ireland, Greece, Portugal, south and west Spain, southern Italy, former East Germany, the Mersey region in Britain and the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

The funds involved were the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) which originated in 1975, the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Guidance section of the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF), the latter two dating back to the original 1957 Treaty of Rome. The funding period 1989–93 was the first to operate on this basis and a second programme of funding operated in the period 1994–9. Enlargement in 1995 led to agreement on an additional spatial objective, Objective 6, to support Arctic communities. The third funding period, 2000–6, is within a rather simpler structure, with only three overall objectives, and has been adopted in accordance with the *Agenda 2000* proposals. However, a fourth fund, the Financial Instrument for Fishery Guidance (FIFG) has been added to the coordinated funds.

The key spatial policy developments of the 1990s have been widely discussed elsewhere (see, for example, Davies 1996; Williams 1996). The Commission undertook a number of studies, notably *Europe 2000* (CEC 1991) and *Europe 2000+* (CEC 1994), and a series of transnational studies of what were to become INTERREG regions. Another indication of the Commission's interest in planning at this time was the proposed Compendium of Spatial Planning Policies and Systems (Nadin and Shaw 1997), and a summary account of all the national planning systems was published by the Commission (CEC 1997c).

Ministers responsible for spatial planning have been meeting regularly, as Informal Councils of Ministers, since there is as yet no treaty competence in spatial planning as such. This series of meetings started in Nantes in 1989. A significant early development was taken at the Informal Council in The Hague, shortly before the Maastricht summit, in 1991. At this meeting it was agreed to establish a committee of senior national officials responsible for spatial planning, to be known as the Committee on Spatial Development. The committee now meets regularly under the chairmanship of the successive EU presidencies, and has played a central role in the preparation of the European Spatial Development Perspective. The Spatial Development Perspective could be regarded as simply the latest in a line of studies reviewing the spatial structure of the European Union as a whole, following the *Europe 2000* and *Europe 2000+* studies by DG XVI (CEC 1991, 1994; Williams 1996). The 2006 revision of the Structural Funds is another matter. Again, at this stage, nothing has been stated officially but senior officials in some member states do state – off the record – that they expect that the ESDP may have a more explicit role in relation to the Structural Funds by then.

A continuing role for spatial planning at the transnational, interregional and cross-border scales remains under discussion as proposals for INTERREG III are prepared. Under the *Agenda 2000* proposals, this would become one of the much reduced range of only three Community initiatives: 'cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation to promote harmonious and balanced spatial planning' (CEC 1997a: 24). In the longer

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term, it is possible to speculate that significant amounts of the Structural Funds may eventually be allocated through the structure of the transnational planning regions. Certainly, preparation for the possibility of this is one motivation for local and regional authorities which are participating in existing INTERREG programmes.

Spatial policy making for the decade 2001–10 will be highly influenced by the programme of EU enlargement. This was the central theme of the *Agenda 2000* document (CEC 1997a). This set out the basic argument for the reform of the Structural Funds in preparation for the very substantial demands that are likely to be made upon them following the accession of former Communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The basic pattern of Structural Funds which has been agreed broadly follows the *Agenda 2000* proposals.

Regional policy and Structural Funds after 2000

At the Berlin European Council on 24 and 25 March 1999 the member states agreed a new financial framework for the European Union's policies during the 2000–6 period. On 21 June 1999, after the agreement of the European Parliament, the European Council formally adopted new regulations for the Structural Funds. In the field of regional and labour market policies, the Council agreed to allocate a total of €195 billion to the Structural Funds for 2000–6, thereby allowing the member states to confirm the European political priority of maintaining efforts to improve economic and social cohesion. The Commission has set budget ceilings for each member state under each priority objective of the Structural Funds: Objective 1 (for regions whose development is lagging behind); Objective 2 (regions undergoing economic and social conversion); and Objective 3 (national education, training and employment). The Commission also established the list of areas eligible for Objective 1 funding for the 2000–6 period, and the population ceilings for areas eligible for Objective 2 funding. The United Kingdom has been allocated €16.596 billion (£10 billion) for 2000–6 that represents on an annual basis a 2.4 per cent increase compared with the previous planning period 1994–9. There are four different Structural Funds concerned by these allocations: the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund and the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance. These are used in different combinations in order to address the three priority objectives.

Objective 1: Regions whose development is lagging behind

Objective 1 aims to promote the development and structural adjustment of regions whose development is lagging behind. Regions with a GDP *per capita* of less than 75 per cent of the Community average are eligible for Objective

1 funding. For the 2000–6 period, in Britain, South Yorkshire, west Wales and the Valleys, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly have become eligible for Objective 1 funding. The Merseyside region remains eligible for Objective 1 funding in the 2000–6 period. The Northern Ireland region and the Highlands and Islands region of Scotland, both of which were eligible for Objective 1 funds during the 1994–9 period, now have a GDP *per capita* higher than 75 per cent of the Community average and are therefore no longer eligible for Objective 1 funding. Aid will nevertheless continue to these regions until 2005. The 2000–6 budget for Objective 1 is £3.8 billion (€6.2 billion), divided between the following areas:

- €4.685 billion is allocated to South Yorkshire, west Wales and the Valleys, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, and Merseyside.
- €400 million will go towards a programme aiming to support the peace process in Northern Ireland (under the PEACE initiative).
- €1.166 billion will make up the transitional funding that Northern Ireland and the Highlands and Islands will receive.

Objective 2: Regions undergoing economic and social conversion

Objective 2 (which replaces the Objectives 2 and 5b of the 1994–9 period) aims to support the economic and social conversion of areas experiencing structural problems. For the 2000–6 period, areas with structural difficulties have been divided into four distinct categories: industrial, rural, urban and fisheries-dependent zones. In July 1999 the European Commission decided the ceiling for the number of people in each member state eligible for Objective 2 funding, and for the United Kingdom this ceiling was set at 13.8 million inhabitants, or 24 per cent of the total British population. The associated decision on EU Objective 2 allocations was made in direct proportion to the eligible population. The average level of assistance per head of population is therefore €41.4 (1999 prices) per annum in the United Kingdom as well as in the rest of the Union. Within this framework, the United Kingdom receives £2.828 billion (€4.5 billion). This budget is divided into two elements:

- €3.989 billion for eligible Objective 2 areas.
- €706 million for transitional support (for areas which were eligible for Objective 2 and 5b funds in 1994–9 but which are no longer eligible).

Objective 3: Education, training and employment

Objective 3 aims to support the adaptation and modernisation of education, training and employment policies and systems and replaces the former

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Objectives 3 and 4. Objective 3 funds are not allocated to designated zones but rather are targeted on national policy priority outside the Objective 1 regions. For the period 2000–6 the United Kingdom will receive under Objective 3 a total of £2.6 billion and compares with €3.680 billion (£2.7 billion) during the period 1994–9.

Fisheries

The Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance funds complementary action taken under the Common Fisheries Policy. In Objective 1 regions the FIFG funds are integrated into other regional development programmes, and in areas which are situated outside Objective 1 regions a budget of €121 million, or £73 million, has been allocated to the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance in the United Kingdom for 2000–6.

Rural development policy

The United Kingdom will also benefit from the part of the Common Agricultural Policy concerned with rural development and funded by the Guarantee Section of the European Agricultural Guarantee and Guidance Fund. This support lies outside the policy framework of the Structural Funds. The EAGGF – Guarantee Section now supports a series of measures covering the whole of the European Union: early retirement from farms, financial support for Less Favoured Areas, forestry, the agri-environment, investment in agricultural holdings, the setting up of young farmers, training, improving the processing and marketing of agricultural products, and promoting the adaptation and development of rural areas. There are no designated areas for rural development, since all rural areas are eligible for support under the measures proposed. Within the framework of the rural development policy the annual allocation of funds to the United Kingdom will be £93 million.

Alongside these three priority objectives, the United Kingdom will also benefit from support under the Structural Funds for four Community initiatives: URBAN, LEADER, EQUAL and INTERREG. The total budget for these initiatives in the United Kingdom for the period 2000–6 is £579 million.

URBAN

The European Commission decided in April 2000 to establish a Community initiative concerning economic and social regeneration in urban areas known as URBAN II. Under URBAN II, Community funding is made available for measures in areas that face a high concentration of social, environmental and economic problems present in urban agglomerations. This involves a package of operations that combine the rehabilitation of obsolete infra-

structure with economic and labour market action complemented by measures to combat social exclusion and to upgrade the quality of the environment. During the 1994–9 programming period, URBAN funded programmes in a total of 118 urban areas. The total Community contribution amounted to approximately €900 million at 1999 prices, which resulted in a total eligible investment of €1.8 billion and targeted 3.2 million people throughout Europe. A further €164 million between 1989 and 1999 supported fifty-nine Urban Pilot Projects within the framework of the innovative actions under the European Regional Development Fund. These projects promoted urban innovation as well as experimentation in economic, social and environmental matters on a smaller scale than URBAN, but have produced encouraging results, particularly as regards participative, integrated approaches to urban regeneration.

The new URBAN framework for action recognises the importance of mainstreaming the urban dimension into Community policies, in particular assistance from the Structural Funds, and this requires the introduction of an explicit urban component into regional development programmes. In both Objective 1 regions and Objective 2 areas, this approach means that the various programming documents under the Structural Funds should include integrated packages of operations in the form of integrated urban development measures for the main urban areas in the region. Such measures can make a vital contribution to balanced regional development or conversion. The objectives of the new Community initiative are:

- To promote the formulation and implementation of particularly innovative strategies for the sustainable economic and social regeneration of small and medium-size towns and cities or of distressed urban neighbourhoods in larger cities.
- To enhance and exchange knowledge and experience in relation to sustainable urban regeneration and development in the Community.

The number of urban areas to be covered under the new initiative will be approximately fifty and the population coverage of each urban area should be at least 20,000, although this minimum could be reduced to 10,000 in some instances. The form the bid should take is that each city, town or urban neighbourhood to be supported must present a single problem to be tackled within a coherent geographical area and must also demonstrate the need for economic and social regeneration or a situation of urban crisis using relevant indicators. The urban areas to be supported may be located either within or outside areas eligible for support under Objectives 1 and 2 and must comply with at least three of the following criteria:

- A high level of long-term unemployment.
- A low level of economic activity.

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- A high level of poverty and exclusion.
- A specific need for conversion, owing to local economic and social difficulties.
- A high number of immigrants, ethnic and minority groups, or refugees.
- A low level of education, significant skill deficiencies and high drop-out rates from school.
- A high level of criminality and delinquency.
- Precarious demographic trends.
- A particularly rundown environment.

LEADER+

The European Commission has approved guidelines for the new Community initiative for rural development, LEADER+, and the Commission's contribution to LEADER+ in the 2000–6 period will be €2,020 million, financed by the EAGGF – Guidance Section. As its name implies, LEADER+ will not be a simple continuation of the existing LEADER II initiative but will be a more ambitious initiative aimed at encouraging and supporting high-quality and ambitious integrated strategies for local rural development. It will also put a strong emphasis on cooperation and networking between rural areas. All rural areas of the European Union will, in principle, be eligible under LEADER+.

EQUAL

EQUAL will bring together the key players in a geographical area or sector. The different worlds of public administration, non-governmental organisations, social partners and the business sector (in particular small and medium-sized enterprises) will work in partnership, pooling their different types of expertise and experience. These 'Development Partnerships' will agree a strategy within which they will try out new ways of dealing with problems of discrimination and inequality already identified. Central to the work of each Development Partnership will be its links with at least one partnership from another country and its involvement in a network of others dealing with the same theme across Europe. The new ideas will be tested with a view to using the results to influence the design of future policy and practice.

INTERREG

The INTERREG Community initiative dates back to the first round of Community initiatives in 1989. The aims of the initiative are to:

- Assist internal and external border regions of the European Union to overcome specific problems concerning development resulting from their relative isolation within national economies and within the Union as a whole, in the interests of the local population and in a manner compatible with the protection of the environment.
- Promote the creation and development of networks of cooperation across internal borders and, where relevant, the linking of these networks to wider Community networks within the framework of the single market.

In the early years INTERREG was primarily a programme for cross-border cooperation across land borders. Consequently the United Kingdom has had little experience of the first generation of INTERREG. The Northern Ireland–Republic of Ireland border was a beneficiary, and this cross-border programme has since become one of the means whereby the European Union has been able to offer tangible support for the peace process. However, this border tends to be regarded as a special case and has not received much attention among planners on the British mainland. Real cross-border planning issues are now confronting the Irish authorities, however, for example as a result of proposed shopping centre developments in Derry which will have clear implications for traffic generation and existing shopping provision in Donegal, in the Republic of Ireland (Monaghan 1997).

Not only did confining INTERREG to land borders have the obvious effect of discriminating against several parts of the European Union, especially in peripheral areas, it also ruled out many of the border regions most in need of measures to overcome impediments to cross-border integration. As a consequence, the concept of ‘maritime borders’ was introduced. These were areas where a high level of interaction and interdependence over, usually, a short sea crossing occurred. The north-west coast of Greece and the south-east coast of Italy formed one such INTERREG area, which was of greater importance since the Yugoslav conflict effectively cut Greece off from traditional overland road and rail connections and made it an island within the European Union. Britain was eligible for two maritime INTERREG programmes, for Kent–Nord Pas de Calais and the Celtic INTERREG linking west Wales and the eastern seaboard of Ireland. The Kent link was clearly signalling support for the Channel tunnel project, and the latter was in effect a forerunner of the type of situation faced by INTERREG IIC (Williams 1996: 161–5; Cawley 1998).

It was with the advent of the second generation of funding that INTERREG became a national spatial policy programme for the United Kingdom. INTERREG II has three parts. INTERREG IIA is a continuation of cross-border planning programmes, with maritime borders over relatively narrow stretches of water being very much part of this. INTERREG IIB focuses on selected energy networks, and is outside the scope of this discussion. INTERREG IIC is the part that has attracted most attention in the United

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Kingdom, and is the most innovative aspect of this phase. It is concerned with spatial planning cooperation at the transnational level within Europe. It is not confined to the European Union, however, since Central and Eastern European countries in transition are also playing an important role in contributing to the building of links between the European Union, the accession countries and those outside this process.

In the context of EU spatial planning initiatives, INTERREG IIC has two purposes, which may be simply labelled as its horizontal and its vertical functions. The horizontal function attempts to promote European integration by creating a sense of the regions of Europe, providing them with greater identity and giving financial support for spatial planning initiatives which may help achieve this by promoting greater interaction and practical cooperation. The general European integration purpose is served in so far as INTERREG contributes to reducing the significance of national borders within the single market generally by promoting the spatial integration of regions of Europe, and specifically by helping to overcome the non-tariff barrier effect of different national planning systems and promoting cooperation between local and regional authorities in different member states. To this end, all individual projects must involve at least two member states or participating countries.

The vertical function attempts to provide the link between the European Spatial Development Perspective at the supranational scale and the planning activities of the local and regional authorities of member states. INTERREG funding is modest in comparison with mainstream budgets for such authorities, but can provide the stimulus for planners working at these levels to think beyond their local boundaries. The whole of the United Kingdom is now eligible to participate in at least one of three transnational planning regions out of the total of seven designated under IIC, namely the North Sea, the Atlantic Space and the North-western Metropolitan Area. The INTERREG IIC programme came to an end in December 1999, in the sense that all projects must have been approved by then and expenditure committed. The details of INTERREG III are still uncertain although, at the time of writing (January 2001), the principle of the initiative has been accepted by member states.

Chapter 3 discusses the development of another European initiative that will potentially have a significant impact on the planning systems of individual member states: the European Spatial Development Perspective.

3 The European Spatial Development Perspective

Chapter 2 explained the emergence of the European Commission's remit in relation to spatial planning. Europe's interest in planning matters has increased significantly since the Maastricht Treaty even though, legally, the European Commission officially possesses no legal mandate to develop pan-European directives and policies in relation to spatial planning. The development of environmental policy, transportation policies in respect of Euro-corridors, and regional economic policy in the form of Structural Funds, have all created a lasting impact on member states and have influenced the context of member states' planning systems. This context is particularly notable for providing financial backing for projects and for addressing the issue of sustainability. Over the last decade the establishment of the INTERREG initiative, intended to foster transnational cooperation in relation to planning between different European regions across traditional member states' boundaries, has enhanced the European spatial polity further by relying on voluntary interregional agreements between planning institutions. This chapter explores the further development of European interest in planning matters since the formulation of the framework document for the spatial development of the European Union as a whole, the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP). Although the research discussed later in the book antedates the development of the Spatial Development Perspective, this discussion is included here to provide a complete picture of the emergence of European spatial policy and planning. Following an introduction to the history of the preparation of the document, the chapter explores the themes of the European Spatial Development Perspective and assesses how they may potentially impact upon urban and rural areas. This discussion is framed by a debate on what this might mean for member states' policy- and decision-making systems, and for the institutions of governance within member states that are responsible for formulating and implementing spatial planning processes.

The development of the European Spatial Development Perspective

The European Spatial Development Perspective was created as a broad policy framework identifying the spatial impacts of the various substantive policies and initiatives of the European Community within member states that would be of use to policy makers at various spatial scales. In its final form the Spatial Development Perspective was approved by a council of European Planning Ministers at Potsdam in May 1999 ((CSD 1999); see Faludi (2001)). The Spatial Development Perspective is notable since it is a document that is intended to assist national, regional and strategic policy makers in each of the member states, even though it is a product of close collaboration between the various national government departments responsible for planning and their expert advisers. It sets out an agreed framework for European spatial planning issues and rests on the political support member states confer upon it. The document was the outcome of a six-year process of preparation, although the proposals to produce a Europe-wide non-binding spatial common point of reference stemmed from the late 1980s (Williams 1999, 2000). Prior to the European Spatial Development Perspective, the broad policy context within which spatial planning operated in the European Union was also framed by two other notable documents, *Europe 2000* (CEC 1991) and *Europe 2000+* (CEC 1994), both of much wider political significance for the whole future of the European Union.

A number of versions of the European Spatial Development Perspective have been widely circulated. These have comprised, firstly, the Draft European Spatial Development Perspective which was produced for the ministers meeting in Noordwijk in 1997 under the Dutch presidency (CSD 1997), second the Complete Draft, agreed at the meeting in Glasgow in 1998 under the UK presidency (CSD 1998), and the Final Draft version at Potsdam in 1999 (CSD 1999). With the world agenda provided by increasing globalisation, technological advances, improved communications, and changing demographic and social trends, the long-term spatial development trends of Europe were acknowledged to be influenced and determined by three overall factors which formed the background to the European Spatial Development Perspective:

- The progressive economic integration and related increased cooperation between the member states.
- The growing importance of local and regional communities and their role in spatial development.
- The anticipated enlargement of the European Union and the development of closer relations with its neighbours (CSD 1999: 7).

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The overall purpose of the European Spatial Development Perspective is to reiterate 'the EU aim of achieving a balanced and sustainable development, in particular by strengthening economic and social cohesion' (CSD 1999: 10). The cue for this objective stems from the UN Brundtland Report (WCED 1987), which not only discusses the need for sustainable development within the formulation of environmentally sound economic development that preserves present resources but also covers the need for balanced spatial development in the future. For the European Commission, this means reconciling the social and economic claims of spatial development with the area's ecological and cultural functions. This, in turn, contributes to sustainable and balanced territorial development, and allows the Union to transform itself from an economic union into an environmental and social union. As the ESDP makes clear, 'The European Spatial Development Perspective provides the possibility of widening the horizon beyond purely sectoral policy measures, to focus on the overall situation of the European territory and also take into account the development opportunities which arise for individual regions' (CSD 1999: 7).

In order to develop this further, the European Community has established three interrelated objectives which form the fundamental goals of European policy:

- Economic and social cohesion.
- Conservation of natural resources and cultural heritage.
- More balanced competitiveness of the European territory.

Although these objectives may seem rather abstract in the context of individual member states' planning systems, there is a clear expectation that 'these goals must be pursued simultaneously in all regions of the EU and their interactions taken into account' (CSD 1999: 11). As early as 1994, when the Spatial Development Perspective was in its infancy, the Planning Ministers of the member states agreed three principles for the spatial development of the European Union. These were agreements on:

- Development of a balanced and polycentric urban system and a new urban–rural relationship.
- Securing parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge.
- Sustainable development, prudent management and the protection of the natural and cultural heritage.

The European Spatial Development Perspective therefore intends to encourage policy makers to forge links between existing EC sectoral and funding programmes and the need for an integrated approach to territory, on the one hand, and the future relationship between the urban and the rural

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on the other. Given the concentration of economic activity within a distinct geographically core area of Europe, known as the zone of global economic integration or 'pentagon' and defined by the metropolitan areas of London, Paris, Milan, Munich and Hamburg, the European Spatial Development Perspective attempts to promote 'polycentric development' across the European territory which will allow alternative development patterns to emerge. These alternative patterns are to emerge from on-going processes of cooperation and coordination and focus on territory.

The Final version of the European Spatial Development Perspective develops a series of sixty policy options accompanied by appropriate rationales. More detailed analysis of underlying spatial trends is also provided as Part B of the overall document. It is beyond the scope of this book to examine the detailed policies of the Spatial Development Perspective but it is acknowledged that they will provide a framework for planning policies in all member states and at all levels of governance. The Spatial Development Perspective is in no sense a legally binding document but it is anticipated that it will exert some influence over the coordination and cohesion of Commission policy making. Its strength lies in the fact that it has been produced on an intergovernmental basis by the Committee for Spatial Development, working in close association with the Commission, so member state governments cannot reasonably argue that their thinking is not represented. It has also been subject to a relatively extensive, although elite, form of public participation (Williams 1999, 2000).

Much of the document remains at an abstract level and one should not expect immediate changes to the ways in which individual member states operationalise their planning systems. Nevertheless, the scope for change is great, particularly in the linking of EC sector and financial programmes with spatial policy making. Within the United Kingdom, for example, there exists a clear potential for the emergence of alternative ways of defining urban and rural problems and formulating spatial planning policies as a direct consequence of devolution to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Each of these countries is already preparing its own version of a national spatial development framework that takes into account the European (and ESDP) agenda and makes inroads into linking financial programmes, such as the Structural Funds, with planning policies (see Tewdwr-Jones 2001b, 2001c). The Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions has also recently published research examining the issue of polycentric development and urban-rural relations from a UK dimension (DETR 2000a).

Although there is no formal relationship between the Structural Funds and the Spatial Development Perspective, it is reasonable to assume, or at least arguable, that spatial planning and the European Spatial Development Perspective will come to play a more significant role in the *Realpolitik* of investment and infrastructure planning, for the allocation of the EU Structural Funds, and in the realisation of cohesion objectives in other EU policy sectors.

Officially, the European Spatial Development Perspective is non-binding, and the principle that it has no formal connection with the revision of the Structural Funds in 2000 is embodied in the Leipzig principles upon which the whole exercise is based (Williams 1996: 221; BMBau 1994, 1995; Schön 1997). It will nevertheless be called upon in negotiation whenever any member state finds it expedient to do so, and will figure in the background to all negotiations. Meanwhile the guidelines for the next programming period of the European Regional Development Fund are expected to require implementation through the Single Programming Documents to relate to spatial strategies at the regional level.

The development of the European Spatial Development Perspective and of other European spatial policy instruments has been a product of government by committee. It is a distinction that sits easily in Weiler's (1995) definition of the three modes of governance: international, supranational and infranational. This distinction, between the formal and informal working mechanisms of European spatial planning, is important, since it relates to the issue of existing and future institutional structures for European Union spatial policy formulation and delivery. European Union spatial planning policy has now developed into a series of EU committees comprising expert groups representative of different administrative levels possessing their own networks outside and overlapping the formal tiers of government (Weiler 1999). Although these representatives owe allegiance to their political administrative levels where formal planning policy making resides within existing member state political boundaries, they also possess a remit to ensure that policy-making structures and processes agreed informally outside their traditional parameters are workable and influential. Williams (2000) argues that the intergovernmental status of the European Spatial Development Perspective is a strength, formulated out of a long process of consultation and agreement, since it is more difficult for member states to ignore its content even if the document itself possesses no legal remit and the European Union lacks a statutory planning role.

Taking the European Spatial Development Perspective forward

Its cultural variety is seen as one of the most significant development factors for the European Union and 'spatial development policies, therefore, must not standardise local and regional identities in the EU' (CSD 1999: 7). On the surface, this may appear to be a contradiction. The long-term trends of the European Union, together with reform of both the Structural Funds and the Common Agricultural Policy, are intended to be built upon to create new policy opportunities on a variety of spatial scales. So although legitimacy is accorded to difference within Europe, the member states have found it necessary to develop a loosely bonded document that applies on a pan-

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European basis. Clearly, flexibility is the order of the day, with an element of reluctance on the part of some member states to surrender national discretion over planning matters (hence the emergence of ‘subsidiarity’; see DETR 1999 in relation to the United Kingdom). It will be interesting to witness to what degree a pan-European spatial planning perspective can be realised in practice, given the loose and politically dependent nature of the Spatial Development Perspective and the probable sovereign determination of individual member states to practise their own forms of planning that all sit fairly easily under the European spatial planning umbrella term. Perhaps in this context, and to put it more cynically, the chances of the European Spatial Development Perspective ‘failing’ may therefore appear to be rather remote. Nevertheless, for the present time, the European Spatial Development Perspective will be an important factor in the formulation and development of member states’ and regional levels’ planning policy. The commitment member states publicly show to the European Spatial Development Perspective will be almost as significant as the degree to which it is actually utilised as a guide for policy-making purposes.

The political context within which the European Spatial Development Perspective is applied, or at least taken into consideration by national and sub-regional planning institutions, will occur on two levels: at a European political and territorial level; and at a member state political and administrative level (see Figure 3.1).

With respect to the European territorial level, European policies and regional cooperation will seek alternative ways of conceptualising urban and rural problems that transcend existing political and administrative boundaries within member states. This provides an overarching perspective but the degree of legitimacy given to this level is predominantly dependent on the member states themselves providing political commitment for its continuation. In this context, and because of the lack of formal legal powers granted to spatial planning on a pan-European basis, the degree of political coherence is

<i>Scale</i>	<i>Planning level</i>	<i>Political determination</i>
European	Political and territorial	Weak
COMMITMENT		
Member state	Political and administrative	Strong

Figure 3.1 The political context of European spatial planning and the European Spatial Development Perspective. *Source:* Tewdwr-Jones (2001a)

potentially weak, both horizontally between member states and vertically between Europe and individual member states.

At the national level, existing sectoral policies centred on delivering a robust and sustainable planning framework within traditional political and administrative boundaries will continue. These policies will be delivered by two institutions: national legislative parliaments and assemblies, and sub-national, regional or devolved assemblies. The legal legitimacy of this political coherence is strong, since individual member states possess their own sovereign planning powers and agencies of planning exist within formal national and regional political, legal, governmental and administrative boundaries (Newman and Thornley 1996). If anything, there is scope within some Western European member states for this coherence to be extremely strong, particularly where the process of European planning integration has been shadowed by a process of devolution to sub-national areas. Devolution provides opportunities for local regions and communities to address their own urban and rural concerns. (See, for example, Lloyd and McCarthy 2000 and Tewdwr-Jones 2001b on Scotland, Tewdwr-Jones 1998 and 2001c on Wales, Uranga and Etxebarria 2000 on the Basque country and Ledo 2000 on Galicia.) The links between these two levels and the degree to which they become strong bonds or loose threads therefore rests on political commitment of some sort. If the European Spatial Development Perspective is to be utilised as a guide in the development of member states' and regional agencies' planning policies, this link will need to be kept in check.

The European Spatial Development Perspective will potentially change (rhetorically or actually) the scope of planning for many of the member states and, in so doing, provide an enhanced element of complexity to planning activity that institutions of governance will need to react to. In essence, it requires planners adopt a much broader mind frame to resolve policy dilemmas, by thinking beyond the strategies, parameters and political requirements of their own particular employing agencies. The ESDP exercise could therefore be viewed as a welcome tonic for planning in setting challenges to innovative forms of strategy, purpose, legitimacy and creativity. These challenges will rest with the planners themselves.

Spatial planning: the challenge for planning institutions

Thus far in this chapter we have discussed planning as an institutional, political and governmental process, sitting in the midst of a complex series of changes occurring predominantly at the European level but also impacted upon by changes within member states. We now turn to the substantive content and direction of spatial planning, since this too is undergoing a transformation or broadening out into new realms and new requirements of delivery.

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Planning is a governmental process which has the aim of delivering, as far as possible, sustainable development. Such a sustainable framework should provide for a member state's needs, including its commercial, industrial and residential requirements, taking account of environmental protection. It should develop areas in the most efficient way possible while providing quality environments in which people wish to live and work, and shape new development patterns to ensure that there is less reliance on the need to travel. Finally, it should protect those features of the built and natural environment that are worthy of conservation. A sustainable planning process is one of the overarching aims of the European Spatial Development Perspective but the prime objective is to secure increased territorial and social cohesion within the European Union. Within the separate member states, the Perspective's impact on national and regional government policies will result in a re-examination of the problems associated with urban and rural territories and the relationships between them.

The European Spatial Development Perspective provides for the future of spatial planning within Europe to occur in a 'polycentric' way (DETR 2000a; Richardson and Jensen 2000). The concept of polycentric development has three 'arenas of focus' in European spatial planning and regional geography:

- At the pan-European level, interregionally, through the creation of multiple growth zones across Europe.
- At the territorial level, intra-regionally, through the growth of multiple urban centres.
- At the urban agglomeration level, intra-urban, through the promotion of growth points within large urban areas, such as city-regions.

Although this perspective seems to have a predominantly urban focus, the relationship between the rural and urban, or periphery and core, could be directly affected. Depending on member states' decisions as to which of the 'arenas of focus' to concentrate on, problems associated with rural or urban areas could in future be viewed as part of a wider political solution to resolving broader sub-national issues. Indeed, the ESDP document suggests that the Structural Funds will need to further develop an integrated approach in the next generation of structural interventions by implementing measures 'which look at urban centres as part of a wider (regional) territory' (CSD 1999: 16). Labour market changes, retirement migration, agricultural decline, land use conflicts and the conservation of historical and cultural assets within the sub-national area could all be viewed from the perspective of the rural community and the potential offered by the urban area. Similarly, problems at the urban level may stem from rural locations, such as the centralisation of food processing and the economic decline of market towns. The rural-urban relationship is complex but it is this that should be the focus of future policy initiatives – the dynamics of the rural and urban together – rather than sectoral

policies addressing ‘urban’ or ‘rural’ issues, devised by separate policy makers and promoted through separate funding mechanisms. This will be the challenge for current institutions structured within traditional political and administrative boundaries.

This broader framework transposes academic and policy makers’ attempts to define urban or rural areas and generate appropriate indicators and, in turn, policy solutions, into a much broader laboratory for study. The European Spatial Development Perspective suggests that future study should focus on the integration of town/city with countryside/rural areas, the relationship between them and the intra-regional solutions that could be formulated to address them. This represents a challenge to existing EU and national state policies and the boundaries and delivery mechanisms within which they presently reside. Essentially, and following Figure 3.1, the issue for examination becomes how the second level of policy (EU territorial) impacts upon the first level (member states’ political and administrative) or rather what the degree of interdependence is between the two levels.

The focus on core–periphery (or urban–rural) relations necessitates an analysis of territory, rather than periphery, urban or rural alone. Achieving growth zones within regions that benefit existing urban areas and the rural areas surrounding them could lead to a strengthening of regional cohesion both economically and socially, and could also take into account cultural, linguistic, environmental and historical linkages that are presently key features of some more rural locations although such features are rarely taken into account sufficiently through policy development. This would also result in attention focusing on infrastructure relationships between the core and periphery, such as transport links, access to communication and services, and labour market opportunities.

In the context of the changing political and institutional structures of some member states and the European Union, and following the UK government’s (DETR 2000a, b) research on the subject, the key issues that warrant attention in reconceptualising town and country, or urban and rural, or spatial planning, into a broader intra-regional perspective of territory can be summarised as:

- Agglomeration and dispersal within regions.
- Mobility, multiplicity and the significance of place.
- The governance of territories.
- The polycentric vision as an opportunity.
- A new conceptualisation of the urban and rural, or core and periphery.

These five points form the challenge for the next five to ten years for spatial planning in Europe, and for the institutions of planning to deliver effective policies and mechanisms that: can be implemented; are inclusive; are

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coordinated; and above all, are sustainable (Faludi, 2000). It will be by no means an easy process.

Conclusion

The patterns of spatial policy development that are likely to prove dominant during the first decade of the twenty-first century can already be discerned. A distinction between a narrow and a wider view of the scope of spatial policy is helpful in order to help understand where to place different initiatives. The narrow definition of EU spatial policy focuses precisely on the European Spatial Development Perspective plus the programme of action that followed its adoption in 1999, including the proposed European spatial planning observatory initiative known as ESPON. A modest widening of the scope of EU spatial policy incorporates the Structural Funds and Community Instruments. One of the latter, INTERREG, is explicitly a spatial planning instrument, and others, especially LEADER and URBAN, focus on closely related issues of rural and urban policy respectively. Broaden the interpretation of spatial policy even further and one can include transport policy, especially the programme of Trans-European Transport Networks (TETNs), environment policy, coastal zone management and energy policy under the umbrella of spatial planning. At the European scale, it will be the relationship between the European Spatial Development Perspective and the Commission's financial measures and Community Instruments that will receive the most immediate attention over the next few years.

At the meeting of Planning Ministers in Tampere in Finland in October 1999 an Action Programme to follow up the European Spatial Development Perspective was agreed. Some elements of this took the form of dissemination and publicity programmes, including a proposal to develop material for school geography teaching. Other elements included development of new planning instruments to develop ideas proposed within the Perspective's policy options. A good example of the latter is the proposal to develop the concept of Territorial Impact Assessment (TIA), a procedure that has existed in Austrian and German planning for many years and may lend itself to adaptation to the EU spatial planning context.

Chapters 2 and 3 have highlighted the development of the European Union's remit in relation to planning and illustrated how the lack of a legal remit for Europe-wide spatial planning powers has been circumscribed by reliance on informality and voluntary cooperation between member states. It has also been shown how, since the preparation of the European Spatial Development Perspective, spatial planning within Europe has been gradually broadened to encompass planning policies, financial instruments, and transnational agreements and networking. This is in marked contrast to the traditional British way of defining planning as nothing more than a statutory land use and development system based on development plans and planning control.

In order to progress the discussion to the research element of this book, and given the potential for all these broader based issues to impact upon planning policy and decision making, we decided to scrutinise the full range of European directives and initiatives in an attempt to consider the explicit and implicit EU dimensions of British planning. Purists may argue that so long as EU initiatives do not impose any statutory duty on British planning they should not be considered as impacts at all. Although we appreciate the differences between legal arrangements and decision-making contexts, we consider that the full range of European environmental, economic, maritime and transport measures are potentially so significant for the operation of British planning in practice (particularly the future of British planning after the publication of the European Spatial Development Perspective), that it is necessary to take a broader definition of planning. A narrow land use perspective would mask a great deal of planning operation and would fail to reveal the several different ways Europe does provide an influence on or context for planning in Britain. When purists insist on ring-fencing the definition of planning to be statutory land use and development alone, the European context of British planning is one that, at times, can seem hidden from view. Chapter 4 therefore outlines the range of European directives and measures that either impose a duty on the British planning system from a legal perspective or provide an important context for planning policy and decision making. This will provide a useful framework to illustrate the European dimensions of British planning in practice from Chapter 5 onwards.

4 Categorising EU spatial planning measures

This chapter categorises the range of European measures and initiatives that potentially comprise or impact upon spatial planning, and the planning system of Britain in particular. As we discussed in Chapter 3, a broad perspective of what planning is has been adopted for the purpose of assessing the range of EU measures. This requires an approach that extends beyond the narrow statutory basis of town and country planning in Britain. Europe does have an influence on planning law and on planning policy and development control. The European Commission also promotes policies and initiatives that comprise social, environmental, regional and territorial objectives that impact on the way in which decisions are made and domestic policies formulated in relation to spatial planning. These contextual issues in the British sense are equally valid for planning as a focus on land use planning and development alone. Planning is nothing without appreciating the social, environmental and economic objectives and problems within which the process resides (Tewdwr-Jones 1999b). British planning, along with the systems of most other European member states, has changed markedly over time, and greater attention has now started to focus on the wider objectives planning is designed to address. In many ways, this broader canvas is nothing new; it is merely a return to the wider socio-economic values that were so apparent in the creation of the modern planning system in Britain a hundred years ago (Hall 1992). The desire for social cohesion parallels concern about poor public health in urban areas in Victorian times and the existence of social exclusion. A concern for more balanced development equates with the need to distribute the location of economic growth across regions. A regard for sustainable development relates to the aspiration of ensuring environmental objectives are paramount in urban growth and containment and in the protection of the best landscapes. The labels may have changed, but the broad objectives that planning is there to address have not.

It is difficult to relate to these broader issues in planning practice in Britain at the present time. The last twenty years have witnessed the gradual withering

away of the 'bigger picture' in planning as a consequence of a concerted effort on the part of successive New Right, and to a degree New Labour, governments to limit the economic role and social purpose of planning to a narrow regulatory and mechanistic process (Thornley 1991; Allmendinger and Thomas 1998). During much of the 1980s planning as a motor of economic growth was effectively ignored in favour of the market. The Prime Minister at the time, Margaret Thatcher, famously remarked that 'There's no such thing as society,' which only enhanced the non-societal basis of public policy intervention and justification further. This has been aggravated by a desire to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of planning as a procedural process, with an overt concentration on streamlining, performance targets, speedy decision making, quality control and value for money (Tewdwr-Jones and Harris 1998). This has been accompanied by a renaissance of the technical exercise of development plan preparation and of development control decision-making (Tewdwr-Jones 1994a, 1995). This procedural efficiency reform was undoubtedly required in planning at the time but, in the first few days of the twenty-first century, it is easy for civil servants and professional planners (that is, those charged with administering planning in practice) not to pay sufficient regard to the wider purpose of a spatial planning system. If one indirect effect of the emergence of a European spatial policy, through the European Spatial Development Perspective and various Community Instruments, is to remind professionals in Britain of the 'bigger picture' in planning, this – in our view – can only be welcomed. Old habits die hard, and it will take some time for the broader socio-economic and environmental values that planning can assist with or be based upon in the twenty-first century to become more of an explicit reality among professional planners. This chapter outlines the range of 'bigger' picture issues within planning at least at the European level and commences a more in-depth ambition on our part to reassert planning in Britain, a process that we believe is long overdue (Tewdwr-Jones 1999b).

A typology of EU influences on spatial planning

The way in which EU membership influences planning in Britain depends to an extent on the nature of the EU measures under consideration. Community activity takes a variety of forms, each impacting in different degrees on planning policy and practice in member states. The main types of European measures comprise four themes, and each of these is introduced below.

- *EU legislation.* On the surface, this has the greatest impact on member states, since it imposes legal obligations enforceable in national courts and by the European Court of Justice. Most Community policies are in legislative form, either as regulations or as directives. Regulations are directly applicable in the member states, whereas directives set out general objectives that member

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states must achieve within a set timetable through domestic legislation. Relatively little EU legislation applies explicitly to 'land use planning', but there are many Community laws that apply to other policy sectors which have a significant indirect effect on planning. The precise requirements of directives and regulations have often been unclear, and the European Court of Justice has an important role in interpreting legislation when it rules on cases brought before it. The process of negotiating and agreeing new measures within the Council of Ministers can often be a protracted and complex affair. When agreement has been reached, there is normally a transitional period before EU requirements are transposed into member states' domestic legislation, and any effect is noticed in practice. This may result in the full effects of EU measures in the course of preparation on the planning system not becoming apparent for some years.

- *Financial instruments.* The availability of EU finance provides opportunities for member states and local and regional governments in a variety of subject areas. Member states are obliged to fulfil certain obligations on acceptance of EU finance which may have important implications for their planning systems.
- *Pilot projects, demonstration programmes and experience exchanges.* These are funded by the European Union and may indirectly influence the planning system in practice; they could eventually form the basis of non-binding guidance or policy initiatives issued by the European Commission to the member states.
- *Analytical frameworks and scenarios.* This is a further significant category of EU activity which, although imposing no legal obligations on member states, may nevertheless establish an agenda for the future issuing of EU initiatives.

EU measures and initiatives explicitly focused on planning

Legislation

Partly because of the lack of an explicit planning function within the European Commission and partly because of the principle of subsidiarity (see DETR 1999), very few items of EU legislation are explicitly intended to regulate national spatial planning systems. One of the relatively few examples in practice is the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (EC 85/337, amended by Directive EC 97/11), which has introduced the practice of environmental assessment for certain categories of projects and which also has the effect of extending the types of development requiring planning permission. A further Commission proposal was tabled in 1996 to require

Strategic Environmental Assessment of certain types of plans as well as projects. Negotiation on the form and introduction of a possible directive is likely to take some time, since the principle of Strategic Environmental Assessment is not readily agreed by all member states.

The Directives on the Conservation of Wild Birds (EC 79/409 and subsequent amendments) and of Habitats (EC 92/43) also have a direct impact on land use planning, as a consequence of a requirement to designate protected areas, to manage habitats, and to assess projects and plans which may affect protected areas. The ‘Seveso Directive’ (EC 96/82) on the Control of Major Accident Hazards also imposes land use planning obligations on local authorities by insisting on consideration of the limitation of consequences stemming from major accidents when preparing policies for particular uses within development plans.

Apart from these few examples, EU activity explicitly focused on spatial planning has taken non-legislative forms that impact rather less on what may be regarded as national sovereignty. The pace at which these non-legislative initiatives have been introduced by the Commission increased markedly over the 1990s (see Table 4.1). Examples of such initiatives include the production of a number of studies and analytical frameworks, and support from various sources of finance (mainly the EU Structural Funds) to encourage cooperation in spatial planning, together with a range of pilot and demonstration projects. These initiatives are described below.

Studies and analytical frameworks

The items of legislation described above have been agreed by the Council of Ministers. In addition, since 1989, ministers responsible for spatial planning have met initially once a year but biannually since 1994. Reflecting the fact that there is no explicit reference to spatial planning in the EU Treaties, these meetings have been informal (that is, outside the legal framework of the EU Council of Ministers). Since 1991 the ministerial meetings have been supported at the level of officials by the Committee on Spatial Development (CSD). The committee is a hybrid, standing somewhere between an inter-governmental and a Community institution, since it brings together officials responsible for spatial planning in from both the member states and the Commission – the so-called ‘fifteen plus one’ arrangement. The committee has been responsible for drafting the European Spatial Development Perspective (see Chapter 3).

At Commission level, the Directorate General for Regional Policy (DG XVI) published in 1991 and 1994 respectively two analytical frames of reference in relation to European spatial policy and planning: *Europe 2000* and *Europe 2000+* (CEC 1991, 1994). These two documents were mainly descriptive of present and future spatial trends and were intended to provide a non-binding framework to inform and guide planners. The Commission

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Table 4.1 EU issues that impact upon the planning system

	<i>Environmental protection</i>
1975	Waste Framework
1976	Bathing Water
1979	Quality of Shellfish Waters
1980	Protection of Groundwater
1980	Air Quality: Smoke and Sulphur Dioxide
1982	Air Quality: Lead
1985	Air Quality: Nitrogen oxides
1989	Waste Incineration
1991	Nitrates from Agricultural Sources
1991	Hazardous Waste
1992	LIFE Financial Instrument for the Environment
1994	Packaging
1996	Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control
1996	Air Quality Framework
	<i>Energy and climate change</i>
1996	SAVE II Energy conservation programme
1996	ALTENER II renewable energy sources
	<i>Transport</i>
1996	Trans-European Transport Network Guidelines
	<i>Agriculture and fisheries</i>
1991	Agricultural Structures Regulations
1992	Agri-environment measures
1994	Restructuring of fisheries sector
	<i>Structural Funds</i>
1993	European Regional Development Fund
1993	Agricultural Fund Guidance
2000	Commencement of new Structural Fund programme
<i>Note:</i> Excludes transnational co-operation measures.	
<i>Source:</i> modified from DETR (1998d).	

has also produced a *Compendium of Spatial Planning Systems and Policies* (1997c) which is a comparative analysis of the differing land use and spatial planning systems in the member states, together with a number of thematic case studies (see Shaw *et al.* 1995).

The development of a European spatial policy, gradually, incrementally and – to a degree – informally is intended to establish a more balanced relationship between cities, and an improved urban–rural relationship, parity of access for different regions to communications infrastructures and knowledge, better management and the development of Europe’s natural and cultural heritage. The European Spatial Development Perspective argues to achieve these aims requires, particularly in transnational regions, better coordination, both horizontally, between sectoral policies with a spatial impact in particular geographical regions, and vertically, between different levels of administration (EU, national, regional and local). As we discussed in Chapter 3, the European Spatial Development Perspective does not prescribe how this should be done, beyond encouraging member states and regions to exchange existing planning documents. Rather, it poses a series of key questions that are at the heart of the debate over the European Union’s future role in spatial planning (DETR 1998d). These include:

- How can policies with a spatial impact be better coordinated?
- Should national planning laws be adapted to take account of cross-border and transnational planning issues?
- What role is there for EU legal instruments or more informal voluntary agreements?
- Should the informal Council of Spatial Planning Ministers be formalised, together with the Committee on Spatial Development?
- Should the European Spatial Development Perspective then become a formal Council recommendation?
- Should the EU Treaty be amended to give the European Union explicit competence in spatial planning matters?

The European Spatial Development Perspective thus represents the most recent stage in a continuing, incremental process of developing a constituency and a legal framework for a distinct European spatial planning policy.

In addition to developing frameworks for the support of spatial planning, the Commission has launched initiatives in relation to urban policy which have also tended to be descriptive and analytical. The 1990 Green Paper on the Urban Environment (COM (90) 218) and the Communication towards an Urban Agenda in the European Union (COM (97) 197) both describe current and future pressures on urban areas and invite consultation through dialogue, but without proposing specific policy measures.

Financial instruments

Several member states, including the United Kingdom, have expressed reservations concerning the extension of EU intervention in spatial planning

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matters (for example, in relation to the proposed Strategic Environmental Assessment) although this appeared to reflect the prevailing political attitude of the UK government in the mid-1990s. In response, the European Commission has sought to build international agreement on the development of an EC spatial planning remit – particularly at governance levels below member states – by offering financial support for transnational planning-related initiatives. These initiatives are being financed predominantly by the European Union's Structural Funds, through INTERREG, and Article 10 of the European Regional Development Fund, the latter financing studies and innovative pilot projects.

INTERREG

INTERREG was formally launched in 1990 and is intended to facilitate various forms of transnational cooperation between EU member states, and between member states and neighbouring non-EC countries, in a variety of substantive policy areas (see Chapter 2 for an overview of its establishment). The first phase of the programme, INTERREG I, lasted from 1991 to 1993 and its successor, INTERREG II, ran from 1994 to 1999. INTERREG III has already commenced. During the period of research for this book INTERREG II was impacting on the British planning system. INTERREG II was divided into three sub-categories:

- INTERREG IIA for cross-border cooperation.
- INTERREG IIB for the completion of energy networks.
- INTERREG IIC for cooperation in spatial planning.

The focus of INTERREG IIA was border regions involving two member states only, around a common frontier. The United Kingdom participated in four programmes covering the following areas:

- Kent–Nord Pas de Calais.
- Euro-region Rives-manches (East Sussex; Seine Maritime; Upper Normandy; Somme; Picardy).
- Ireland–Wales Maritime (Mid and west Wales (the former counties of Gwynedd and Dyfed), together with the Dublin, Mid-East and South East Regional Authorities).
- Ireland–Northern Ireland.

Types of measures eligible for funding under INTERREG IIA covered a wide range of different policy areas, some of which were planning oriented. The four programmes involving UK regions all contained commitments between institutions to exchange experience and information, and to develop strategies

in respect of land use and environmental or economic development planning. In contrast to INTERREG IIA, the focus of INTERREG IIC was on three strands: flooding, drought and general cooperation. It is only in relation to the last of these that a link can be formed directly with cooperation in spatial planning matters. The point of departure for each of the joint operational programmes funded under the initiative was that each region should be regarded as ‘an integral transnational planning area’, and that the development of a joint ‘vision’ for the spatial development of the region should be a primary objective of the programme. The United Kingdom participated in three INTERREG IIC programmes, covering the following areas:

- The North Sea Region (between the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Germany and Norway).
- The Atlantic Area (between the United Kingdom, Ireland, France, Spain and Portugal).
- The North West Metropolitan Area (between the United Kingdom, Ireland, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands).

Funding priorities covered cooperation on: urban and regional systems; transport and communication networks; and natural resources and the cultural heritage (North Sea and North West Metropolitan Areas); transport research and technology transfer; tourism; and the environment (the Atlantic Area).

Article 10 of the European Regional Development Fund

Under Article 10 of the European Regional Development Fund, funding for cooperation on spatial planning includes the following measures: pilot actions; innovative pilot projects. Britain is involved in only one pilot action but scheme actions occur in the following European spatial planning areas. It should be noted that the actions may encompass non-EC countries:

- Northern Periphery Area (between the United Kingdom, Sweden and Finland).
- Mediterranean Gateway, formerly known as the Great South West Area (between Portugal, Spain and North Africa).
- Alpine Space, formerly known as The Danube (between Austria, Germany and northern Italy).
- Central and Eastern Mediterranean Space, formerly known as the Archimed area (between Italy, Greece, Cyprus and Malta).

The actors targeted are national governments. The Scottish Office led the development of the programme for the Northern Periphery Area, which covered the Highlands and Islands, and the sparsely populated areas of

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Norway, Sweden and Finland. The content of these pilot actions, and management arrangements, is similar to that of INTERREG IIC. Innovative pilot projects, on the other hand, are located in specific territorial areas such as mountain, coastal, island or rural regions, known as the TERRA programme. Target actors in this case are regional and local authorities, and networks may be transnational or intranational. Fifteen TERRA projects were originally selected by the Commission, and two involved British local authorities: the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit (to assess the sustainability of a river basin) and Stirling Council (to assess the use of geographical information systems on a rural area).

Integrated coastal zone management

There have been four initiatives supporting integrated coastal zone management, and these have comprised the TERRA programme, the LIFE financial instrument for the environment, the PHARE programme in Central and Eastern Europe and INTERREG IIC, all of which contribute to over thirty-five demonstration projects. Some of these are transnational, and within Britain local authorities from Cornwall, Kent, Devon, Dorset, the Isle of Wight, Edinburgh and Down have participated in schemes. The Commission intends to formalise a directive on integrated coastal zone management in due course.

It is still relatively early to judge the impact most of these various programmes have had and are having in Britain and on the planning system. The judgement will depend on a number of issues. These include consideration of the nature of the projects that are the recipients of funding, the progress made in developing joint spatial planning visions, where appropriate, and the influence of those visions, if any, on the content of plans and planning frameworks. One long-term effect of these various financial programmes may be to encourage national, regional and local government officials in the participating EU member states to start adopting a European rather than a national perspective on planning issues, something that the Commission itself is actively promoting.

EU measures with an indirect impact on planning

Currently, the most significant impact of the European Union on British planning comes from legislation and financial assistance applying to a variety of other policy sectors rather than from European measures specifically targeted at planning. The influence of such measures is indirect but can be significant. For example, they may create particular development pressures or constraints within local areas, or require the establishment of new types of plan to sit alongside or inform the policy content of statutory development plans, or they may influence specific development decisions.

Categorising EU spatial planning measures

In recent years the European Commission has consciously chosen to issue fewer formal legislative proposals, preferring instead to publish a greater number of pre-legislative 'Green Papers' for public consultation. Many of the policy options discussed in these documents would have a significant effect on the planning system if they were to be adopted. One example was the 1995 discussion paper on a 'citizens' network' of public transport systems (COM (95) 601), which called for the promotion of public transport, including connections between local transport infrastructure and Trans-European Transport Networks.

The review across all EU policy sectors of current or imminent EU measures covers over fifty items of legislation or other initiatives having an actual, potential or indirect impact on the British planning system. They include measures in the following policy sectors (with selected examples in brackets where relevant) (DETR 1998d):

- Environmental protection.
- Industrial pollution control (for example, directives on integrated pollution prevention and control, and the control of major accident hazards).
- Water quality (for example, directives on the protection of ground water, and urban waste water treatment).
- Air quality (for example, the Air Quality Framework Directive, and directives establishing air quality standards for sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide).
- Waste management (for example, the Waste Framework and Packaging Directives).
- Energy and climate change (for example, EU finance for the establishment of regional and local energy management agencies and plans).
- Transport and Trans-European Transport Networks (of which there are three priority projects in the United Kingdom: Cork–Dublin–Belfast–Larne–Stranraer railway line; the Ireland–UK–Benelux road link; and the west coast main railway line).
- The Common Agricultural Policy.
- The Common Fisheries Policy.
- Regional development (Structural Funds).

Of these, the two policy areas which appear to have the greatest impact on British planning appear to be EU environmental legislation, which imposes both legal and practical requirements in relation to a range of planning activities, and the operation of the EU Structural Funds, which has entailed the introduction in Britain of new structures and procedures which can have an indirect effect on the planning system. For the future, continuing developments in two other policy areas have the potential to exert significant

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influence on the structure and process of planning. These are EU policies on climate change and energy management and the development of Trans-European Transport Networks.

Planning activities influenced by EU measures

The various EU measures outlined above have a variety of effects on the different facets of the planning system in Britain. One way of clarifying these influences is to focus on each of the different planning activities that British local planning authorities engage in. We have identified five main types of activity, and these are briefly described below. They are used to structure the analysis of the research case studies discussed in Chapters 6–11. In addition, EU measures may give rise to the establishment of new or revised administrative structures, which themselves may have a distinctive effect on planning practice.

Drafting statutory development plans

The content of development plans – including structure plans, local plans, unitary development plans, mineral and waste local plans – can be influenced by the European Union in three main ways:

- *The context of the plan.* Explicit references may be made in plans to: the requirements of particular items of EU legislation; the eligibility of particular areas for EU financial assistance; or the impact on the local economy of developments in particular EU policies, such as the establishment of the single market or changes in the Common Agricultural Policy.
- *The formulation of individual policies.* Individual policies described in development plans may need to take explicit account of the requirements of particular items of legislation, or of interpretations put upon that legislation by the European Court of Justice. Policies may also be formulated in such a way as to facilitate developments financed by the EU Structural Funds.
- *The identification of critical areas.* EU legislation may require – legally or in practice – the identification of critical areas which are to be the subject of special protection or remedial measures, and these may need to be identified in development plans. Examples might include Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), both designations under the Birds and Habitats Directives.

The development of plans and strategies other than statutory development plans

Plans other than statutory development plans may be required, encouraged or influenced by a variety of EU measures. Examples could include: regional economic development plans set out in Single Programming Documents (SPDs) (which are required by the EU Structural Fund regulations); local air quality management plans; waste management plans; local energy management plans; and plans for the integrated management of coastal zones. Plans generated entirely within Britain, such as the Environment Agency's Local Environment Action Plans, may also in certain respects reflect EU requirements. Although such plans fall outside the British definition of statutory land use planning, officials from local authority planning departments may be involved in their production, and their objectives may often need to be reflected in statutory development plans.

Development control

The process of development control can be influenced by the European Union in three main ways:

- *The context.* Particular EU policies may generate development pressures, or contribute to local economic decline. For example, the Trans-European Transport Networks may encourage development pressures along designated routes or at termini. European Union legislation on waste water treatment requires the construction of new sewage treatment and sludge incineration facilities. EU management of the European steel industry or of the Common Fisheries Policy may require new regeneration initiatives to be undertaken in areas formerly dependent on those industries.
- *Procedures.* The Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (EC 85/337) has obliged UK planning authorities to require, receive and evaluate environmental statements in respect of various categories of development, and to introduce new forms of consultation and public participation. The Habitats Directive, as transposed by the English national planning policy guidance note PPG 9, *Nature Conservation* (DOE 1994a), has introduced new procedural mechanisms for processing planning applications that impact on Special Areas of Conservation.
- *Individual decisions.* Decisions on individual planning applications may need to take into account EU requirements to respect particular critical areas designed to protect biodiversity, or minimise the risks associated with major industrial hazards.

Transnational cooperation

Local authority planners may benefit from a variety of EU initiatives designed to foster cooperation and the exchange of experience with their counterparts in other EU member states. Such cooperation may be thematic or designed to produce comprehensive strategic plans for adjoining border areas. The impact of such cooperation may not be noticed immediately, but in the longer term British planners may well be influenced by practice elsewhere.

Data gathering

The obligation to gather new kinds of data, often in new forms, may be one result of the transnational cooperation described above. Moreover, the EU Structural Fund regulations require Single Programming Documents to be accompanied by a local State of the Environment report, and an environmental assessment of the future impact of the Single Programming Document. This work may well increase in the future if the EC's Strategic Environmental Assessment requirements are introduced into the British planning system with the objective of assessing all plans.

New organisational structures

The influence of the European Union on administrative structures affecting local planning can take three forms: the establishment of new structures; the design of new strategies and structures; and the appointment of new staff within planning organisations.

- *The establishment of new structures outside the local authority.* Some local authorities may establish, or have a share in, offices located in Brussels designed to facilitate the lobbying of the Commission and the gathering of information on relevant EU activities. Such offices may contribute to the Europeanisation of the authority, including the planning department. A further example is the establishment within Britain of new local partnerships across local authority boundaries to facilitate the drafting and application of Single Programming Documents drawn up in the context of the EU Structural Funds. Such partnerships may have the potential to influence the statutory development plans of individual authorities.
- *New strategies/structures within the authority.* Some local authorities have responded to the challenges and opportunities presented by the European Union by establishing corporate European teams or devising corporate European strategies. Such structures and strategies should increase the awareness of planners to relevant EU developments and funding opportunities.

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- *New appointments within the planning department.* A few local authorities, particularly those engaged in the INTERREG IIA and/or INTERREG IIC Community initiatives involving transnational co-operation on planning or planning-related matters, have appointed European Planning Officers to take responsibility for liaising with their counterparts in other member states.

Following discussion of these various EU measures, the book moves on to discuss the research findings. These are presented within the context of existing governmental boundaries within Britain. Chapter 5 considers the national and regional planning policies within Britain, and Chapters 6–11 provide illustrations of European activity at the local level. Overall the various impacts of Europe on British planning activity are assessed in Chapter 12.

5 The impact of Europe on national and regional planning

Over the last ten years EU interest in planning has increased significantly. Although statutory planning remains a function of each member state, the obligations imposed by the European Commission in the fields of environmental law, the Structural Funds, the Common Agricultural Policy and Trans-European Transport Networks have all impacted upon the context of the operation of the British planning process. Financing to support transnational exchanges between regions within member states is also impacting upon planning personnel, many of whom are involved in formulating policies to address a wide range of social, economic and environmental issues at the local and regional scales. Many of the EU initiatives, notably EC directives, have had to be transposed into domestic legislation, while others form an important – if oft-times uncertain – framework for British policy makers.

With this context in mind, this chapter examines the relationship between the European Union's policies and initiatives, as they may impact upon the planning system of a member state, and the contents of Britain's national and regional planning policy guidance issued by central government to local planning authorities since the late 1980s. The objectives that set the context of the research discussed in this chapter were to assess how the Commission's measures have impacted upon British planning at the national and regional levels of planning, and to ascertain whether this has been reflected at the national and regional levels in planning policy documentation. An indication of the overall tone of British national and regional planning policy documents towards Europe can be discerned from a government statement:

The European context for planning has been largely missing from the planning system in England . . . We fully recognise, therefore, that there needs to be a significant European dimension to our planning system.

(Richard Caborn, MP, DETR Minister for the Regions, Regeneration and Planning, DETR 1998b)

This is the opening section of a policy document released by the British government on *Modernising Planning*, intended to review the future role, format and national objectives of the planning system within the United Kingdom (DETR 1998b). The New Labour government of Tony Blair has attempted to amend the Conservatives' policy towards Europe and the European Union. Previous to this, and for eighteen years, the tendency of the British government had been to largely ignore emerging EU policy where possible, or at least to keep the European Union at arm's length from the statutory and policy-making function within government (Davies *et al.* 1994; Davies 1996). This was part of what may be termed a wider 'Euro-sceptic' attitude within the UK government throughout the 1980s and 1990s and contributed in no small measure to the Conservative Party's electoral disaster in May 1997 (Gowland and Turner 1999). The Conservative Party has been divided on the subject of UK integration with Europe over the last thirty years, and has led to a significant anti-European stance within certain sections of British politics and government (Evans 1999; Kaiser, 1999). The heated political debate within the Conservative Party reached an acrimonious point in the 1990s with well publicised anti-European statements made by serving and former Cabinet ministers (see, for example, Redwood 1997). This 'Euro-sceptic' attitude may have affected spatial planning policy making within the United Kingdom, since the contents of national and regional planning statements usually reiterate or reflect broad government objectives.

While the British government appeared to resist the European integration (or at least harmonisation) of member states' legislative functions during the 1980s and 1990s, the European Union's interest in what has become known as spatial planning matters has, of course, increased significantly over the same period (Williams 1996; see Chapter 2). Britain has been a prominent member of the European Union, and certain planning-related directives have nevertheless been transposed into domestic legislation during this period (for example, environmental assessment and the protection of natural habitats). For the most part, however, as we discussed in Chapter 1, the European Commission has not been able to intervene directly in statutory planning in Britain mainly as a consequence of the lack of legitimacy awarded to the European Union in relation to planning matters; the impact has rather been felt indirectly and a large number of EU spatial planning initiatives have had a significant indirect impact on the operation of the British planning process. As we discussed in Chapter 4, there is great scope for policies on transnational cooperation, Structural Funds, the Common Agricultural Policy, transport policy and environmental and energy policy to impact on the context of planning policy and decision making. Even though many of these topics comprise nationally and regionally subject areas warranting central government intervention, it is not axiomatic for the British statutory planning process to include these issues within a series of documents intended to set broad national objectives for planning practice (Alden 1999). The key

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question is, to what extent has central government's outlook on Europe and European issues since the 1980s affected the drafting and content of British national and regional planning policies? At the general and political level, governments have played down the European dimension of their activities, but has this tendency been adopted in a similar vein within the planning system? If it has, and European issues are absent from the national and regional levels of the British planning process, to what extent is that a matter of concern?

This chapter assesses the impact the European Union has had so far on British national and regional planning policy guidance. It generally reviews how and to what extent the initiatives of the European Union have been transposed into the British land use planning system, and whether this transposition has occurred differently in the three countries of England, Scotland and Wales. This latter issue is important to reveal, since Britain is simultaneously becoming more integrated with the European Union while devolving more powers and responsibility within the United Kingdom. We commence, however, with an introduction to the form and function of national and regional planning policy in Britain.

British national and regional planning: form and function

The importance of the national level of planning policy making is fundamental to the trajectory of the whole planning process, even if planning in Britain is a predominantly local activity (Quinn 1996, 2000; Tewdwr-Jones 1997). Therefore the degree to which national and regional planning policy reiterates, supports or mentions European spatial planning issues will have a bearing on planning policy making at lower tiers of governance. The provision of national policy and planning guidance to local planning authorities has been a key feature of the land use planning process in the United Kingdom since the statutory inception of planning in the 1940s. While the majority of planning functions are implemented at the local level, there is an overriding duty on the part of British central government ministers to provide national coordination and consistency (Tewdwr-Jones 1999a). It has been a function of the Secretaries of State for the Environment, for Wales and for Scotland (now the duties of the National Assembly for Wales and the Scottish Parliament in relation to Wales and Scotland respectively) to ensure that land use is regulated in the public interest, that the planning process facilitates continued economic investment, and that development proceeds in a sustainable way. Although on the surface this national interest is useful to achieve effective strategic coordination by central government, it has also been used to achieve more political planning purposes. The Conservative governments, for example, during the period 1979–97, supported by New Right ideology, achieved centralisation over divergent local policies through the employment

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of this consistency remit with government officials monitoring local policies (Allmendinger and Thomas 1998; Thornley 1991).

Notwithstanding the changing duties of local government in the United Kingdom (Stoker 2000) and the increasing role of a Europe of the Regions (Keating 2000), central government also plays a pivotal role in forming the essential link between the European Union and the local planning process. European Commission directives affecting the land use planning system need to be transposed into domestic legislation and policy guidance for implementation and action at the local level. Similarly, judgements of the European Court may have implications for the way in which the land use planning process is operated. The government ensures that European decisions as they affect land use planning are clearly integrated into the British planning system through the release of revised planning guidance to local planning authorities and in the issuing of new primary and secondary legislation. The documents that have been released by central government to perform this national coordinating and monitoring role to date have comprised the following.

At the national (UK) level:

- Acts of Parliament (primary legislation).
- Statutory Instruments (secondary legislation).
- Circulars (setting out procedural changes in the planning system).

In England:

- Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs) and Minerals Planning Guidance notes (MPGs) (setting out national objectives on key policy matters and released by the Department of the Environment).

In Scotland:

- National Planning Policy Guidelines (NPPGs) and Practice Advisory Notes (PANs) (setting out national objectives on key policy matters and released by the Scottish Executive).

In Wales:

- Planning Policy Guidance (Wales) (PPW) and Technical Advice Notes (TANs) (setting out national objectives on key policy matters and released by the National Assembly for Wales).

National planning policy has been released in a more substantive form since 1988 in the case of England and Wales (Tewdwr-Jones 1994b) and the early 1970s (revised in the early 1990s) in Scotland (Hayton 1996). The documents

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have been released in three formats, representing the countries of England, Scotland and Wales. Most of the documents were released up to the mid-1990s; any release of documents since have been predominantly revisions of existing notes. Planning Policy Guidance notes in England, National Planning Policy Guidelines in Scotland, and Planning Policy Guidance (Wales) aim to provide guidance on general and specific aspects of planning policy. They are intended to provide concise and practical guidance on planning policies in a clear and accessible form. Local planning authorities are required to conform to national planning advice in the drafting of local planning policies, and national planning policies may also be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Below the national level of planning policy in England there also exists a Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) series of publications (Baker and Wong 1997; Roberts 1996b; Wannop and Cherry 1994). Although within the last few years the purpose and remit of Regional Planning Guidance has been enhanced to enable the development of stronger regional strategies and plans (see Roberts and Lloyd 1999; Murdoch and Tewdwr-Jones 1999), one of the purposes of Regional Planning Guidance is nevertheless to interpret national planning policy guidance to provide the framework for the preparation of local planning authorities' development plans. This necessitates regional planning policy sitting within a policy hierarchy, or ladder, that extends from the European to the national to the regional to the local (Tewdwr-Jones 1996). Each tier reflects governmental objectives at each level in addition to providing links upwards and downwards between scales.

This is not the time to discuss the conceptual issues surrounding the confusing and potentially conflicting role that policy documentation at different tiers of governance now performs in Britain (Allmendinger and Tewdwr-Jones 2000a). This might be part of a wider discussion focusing on the 're-scaling' of political processes (Brenner 1999; Jones and MacLeod 1999; MacLeod and Goodwin 1999) in an attempt to establish the autonomous institutional capacity of regions to organise for economic development (Amin and Thrift 1992, 1995; Scott 1998; Storper 1997; Phelps and Tewdwr-Jones 2000). With respect to planning policies, it should be noted that Regional Planning Guidance in some cases performs a political role in setting out political objectives of the regions and, possibly, central government, while in other cases it performs a guiding role to lower tiers of governance to enable local and regional agencies to implement good practice within the planning system, which, after all, operates predominantly at the local level. The distinction between what comprises policy and what may be construed to be guidance therefore remains elusive. Until recently Regional Planning Guidance was released by the Department of the Environment in England following joint preparation by the local planning authorities in each region, subject to monitoring by the relevant government regional offices in England. Since 1999 Regional Planning Guidance is prepared and adopted

by regional governance actors alone as part of a commitment on the part of the Blair government to implement decentralisation from the centre to the regions; in some quarters this has been labelled contentiously a 'new regionalism' (see Keating 1997; Lovering 1997; Amin 1999; Deas and Ward 1999; Lovering 1999; MacLeod 1999).

Although it would be true to say that it is within the 1990s that the European Union's interest in spatial planning has increased noticeably, this period is just as marked for the change in attitude of the British government towards Europe. The attitude of the Blair government in its approach to European issues differs noticeably from that of its Conservative predecessor. This was a consequence in no small way of the attitude of the Labour Planning Minister, Richard Caborn, MP, who enthusiastically embraced European spatial planning issues upon taking office in 1997. Caborn's stance towards Europe, and his determination to introduce a significantly greater European dimension to British spatial planning policy, could lead to a significant change in the context of the formulation of planning policy in Britain.

EU influences on national and regional planning

General planning influences

In assessing the impact of the European Union on the British planning system, it is essential to identify how, and in what ways, European directives have imposed requirements on the land use planning system and how central government has responded in the drafting and revision of national planning policy documents to local planning authorities. For the purpose of assessment, it was decided to undertake an analysis of all British national and regional planning policy guidance to ascertain the explicit and implicit connections with EU policies. The analysis concentrated specifically upon Planning Policy Guidance notes for England, National Planning Policy Guidelines for Scotland, Planning Policy Guidance (Wales), and Regional Planning Guidance notes for England. A complete list of all guidance notes considered in undertaking this project is provided in Tables 5.1–3. In addition to charting the general impacts and influences, six case study documents on particular substantive topics were also examined to ascertain whether and how the British planning documents related to EU directives and other Community initiatives. This was undertaken through interviews with the government officials responsible for the drafting of specific policy guidance notes. The guidance notes selected provided a range of substantive policy topic areas over which the European Union has some spatial planning interest.

From an analysis of all the national and regional planning documents, but particularly the six case study documents, it appears possible to identify the extent of European influence running through the various guidance notes. This influence relates to 'explicit impacts' where reference is made explicitly

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Table 5.1 National Planning Guidance Notes in England and Wales

No. and title	Release date
<i>England</i>	
PPG 1 General Policy and Principles	1997
PPG 2 Green Belts	1995
PPG 3 Housing	1992
PPG 4 Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms	1992
PPG 5 Simplified Planning Zones	1992
PPG 6 Town Centres and Retail Development	1996
PPG 7 The Countryside: Environment Quality, Economic and Social Development	1997
PPG 8 Telecommunications	1992
PPG 9 Nature Conservation	1994
PPG 12 Development Plans and Regional Planning Guidance	1992
PPG 13 Transport	1994
PPG 14 Development on Unstable Land	1990
PPG 15 Planning and the Historic Environment	1994
PPG 16 Planning and Archaeology	1990
PPG 17 Sport and Recreation	1991
PPG 18 Enforcing Planning Control	1991
PPG 19 Outdoor Advertisement Control	1992
PPG 20 Coastal Planning	1992
PPG 21 Tourism	1992
PPG 22 Renewable Energy	1992
PPG 23 Planning and Pollution Control	1994
PPG 24 Planning and Noise	1994
<i>Wales</i>	
PPW Planning Guidance Wales: Planning Policy	1996
PPW Planning Guidance Wales: Unitary Development Plans	1996
<p><i>Note:</i> These are policy notes existing at the time of the research in April 1998. An additional PPG, PPG 10 on Planning and Waste Management, and a replacement PPG, PPG 12 on Development Plans, together with a revised Planning Policy for Wales, were all released in 1999. Draft notes have also been released on the following topics since 1998: PPG 3, Housing; PPG 11, Regional planning; PPG 13, Transport; PPG 25, Flood risk</p>	

Table 5.2 National Planning Policy Guidelines in Scotland

No. and title	Release date
NPPG 1 The Planning System	1994
NPPG 2 Business and Industry	1993
NPPG 3 Land for Housing	1996
NPPG 4 Land for Mineral Working	1994
NPPG 5 Archaeology and Planning	1994
NPPG 6 Renewable Energy	1994
NPPG 7 Planning and Flooding	1995
NPPG 8 Retailing	1996
NPPG 9 The Provision of Roadside Facilities on Motorways	1996
NPPG 10 Planning and Waste Management	1996
NPPG 11 Sport, Physical Recreation and Open Space	1996
NPPG 12 Skiing Developments	1997
NPPG 13 Coastal Planning	1997
NPPG 14 Natural Heritage	1998
NPPG 15 Rural Development	1999
NPPG 16 Opencast Coal and Related Minerals	1999
NPPG 17 Transport and Planning	1999
NPPG 18 Planning and the Historic Environment	1999
<p><i>Note:</i> Only NPPGs 1-11 were in existence at the time of the research in April 1998. Replacements of NPPG 1 and NPPG 6 were released in 2000. A draft NPPG on Radio Telecommunications was also released in 2000.</p>	

to a European directive within the guidance notes. It was found that some policy subject areas have a strong explicit connection with EC directives while other notes have little or no obvious EU links. The EU legislation that has had a direct impact upon the planning policy system in England (and those mentioned within Planning Policy Guidance notes the most often), comprise:

- EC Directive on Waste (72/442 amended by 91/156 and 91/692).
- EC Directive on Birds (79/409 amended by the Habitats Directive).
- EC Directive on Habitats (92/43).

The guidance notes that contain the most extensive explicit references to these directives are those on Nature Conservation (PPG 9), Coastal Planning (PPG 20), Renewable Energy (PPG 22) and Planning and Pollution Control

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Table 5.3 Regional Planning Guidance in England

No. and title	Release date
RPG 1 Strategic Planning Guidance for Tyne and Wear	1989
RPG 3 Strategic Guidance for London Planning Authorities	1996
RPG 3A Strategic Guidance for London: Strategic Views	1991
RPG 3B/9B Strategic Guidance for London: Thames	1997
RPG 6 Regional Planning Guidance for East Anglia	1991
RPG 7 Regional Planning Guidance for the Northern Region	1993
RPG 8 Regional Planning Guidance for the East Midlands	1994
RPG 9 Regional Planning Guidance for the South East	1994
RPG 9A The Thames Gateway Planning Framework	1995
RPG 10 Regional Planning Guidance for the South West	1994
RPG 11 Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands	1998
RPG 12 Regional Planning Guidance for Yorkshire and Humberside	1996
RPG 13 Regional Planning Guidance for the North West	1996
<i>Note:</i> Policy notes existing at the time of the research in April 1998. Draft notes released since are excluded.	

(PPG 23). This reflects significant EU activity in these areas. Perhaps the most comprehensive picture is provided by PPG 9, which explicitly refers to relevant European directives, their transposition into UK legislation, circulars and regulations, and annexes containing sections of the directives.

For the most part, and as a consequence of the legal nature of EC directives and the necessity to integrate them statutorily into the British land use planning system, it is noted that ‘transposition measures’ are used. These transposition measures comprise Statutory Instruments, regulations and departmental circulars, rather than national planning policy. National and regional planning documents are policy-based rather than statutory. Government officials were of the opinion that it was not the function of national and regional planning guidance notes to refer explicitly to EC directives. This was explained by the fact that once they are transposed into the British land use planning system through the introduction of Statutory Instruments and circulars it will only be necessary to refer to the legal basis of the British measures. While this may be legally correct within Britain, and since the policy documents date from the period 1988–94, there can be little doubt that there existed a political preference under the Conservatives not to mention the European root of the policies. If anything, government ministers at the time preferred to claim ownership by identifying the contents of the documents as ‘wholly British’ (from authors’ interviews).

The impact on national and regional planning

The European policy area that receives the greatest attention in national and regional planning documents is nature conservation, as represented by the Birds and Habitats Directives. One reason for this is their explicit land use impact with regard to the designation of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). With regard to other important EC directives that impose requirements on the British planning system, the guidance notes refer to the transposition measures rather than the directives explicitly. For example, reference to environmental assessment within the documents is made to Department of the Environment Circular 15/88 rather than the original EC Directive 85/337. Also, Planning Policy Guidance notes, National Planning Policy Guidelines and Regional Planning Guidance will always make their first reference to other documents in the series when addressing particular policy areas, to guide the reader to the British planning policy context rather than the EU legislative or procedural basis. Officials explained that this was intended to avoid complexity and duplication in a series of documents that are intended, first and foremost, as policy advice on the British planning system to local planning authorities, and not advice on pan-European measures. However, the emphasis on environment and conservation issues may be viewed as a pointed decision of the Conservative government to restrict the European Union's influence over planning to particular narrow sectoral areas. There can be no doubt that EC activity in the field of the environment – both in directives and through initiatives – increased over this same period. There was a legal requirement for the directives to be transposed into domestic legislation, but the Conservative government was not prepared to see this EU influence extend across other substantive policy topics.

Topics addressed within Planning Policy Guidance notes, National Planning Policy Guidelines, Planning Policy Guidance (Wales) and Regional Planning Guidance are both sectoral and spatial. But the explicit connection with EU policies within the national and regional documents is restricted to consideration of measures that impose a statutory obligation. As was discussed in Chapter 4, there are a number of spatial planning issues that affect the context of the British land use planning system. These include European policies in respect of agriculture, fisheries, economic development and transport, in addition to a range of financial and demonstration programmes. However, these broad planning matters do not impose a direct legislative requirement on the preparation of development plans and the control of development that, together, form the core of the British statutory planning process. This difference illustrates the separation between – in the views of government officials – ‘land use planning’ (British planning practice) and ‘spatial planning’ (British planning context). According to the central government officials interviewed at this period, it was not the purpose of national and regional planning policy to discuss broader spatial planning matters, since that would ‘overcomplicate the purpose’ of national and regional planning coordination. It would additionally lead to the bombardment of

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local planning authorities with information that would not be strictly necessary for development plan preparation and development control operation. Once again we see here the distinction made on the part of the government between the narrower statutory definition of planning (plan preparation and control) and the broader definition of local planning authorities' work (planning coordination, and the socio-economic and environmental reasons for intervention).

Specific substantive policy sector influences

The case study national and regional planning documents illustrate the policy-driven focus of the guidance for local planning authorities while highlighting those EC directives that impose statutory obligations. A number of issues from selected documents are worthy of discussion. The six case study policy topics and the related documentation analysed were:

- Nature conservation (PPG 9).
- Transport (PPG 13).
- Coastal planning (PPG 20).
- Planning and pollution control (PPG 23).
- Business and industry (NPPG 2).
- Regional Planning Guidance for the Northern Region (RPG 7).

Nature conservation

Formal European interest in nature conservation stems from the Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (EC 79/409), which places a general obligation on member states to preserve, maintain or re-establish a sufficient diversity and area of habitats for birds, primarily by the creation of protected areas and the management of habitats both within and beyond. The planning implications of the Birds Directive were covered in Circular 27/87, which, for the first time in Britain, drew together and defined local authority responsibilities in respect of Britain's international obligations for nature conservation. Circular 27/87 emphasised that the development control system was an essential part of the government's provision for meeting its obligations under the Birds Directive and explained that if local planning authorities failed to use the legislation available to achieve the objectives of the directive, the UK could be challenged in the European Court.

In May 1992 the Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (EC 92/43) was adopted by the Council of the European Communities. The Habitats Directive, as it is more commonly known, aims to contribute to the maintenance of biodiversity within the

European territory of the member states by establishing a favourable conservation status for habitat types and species selected as of 'Community interest'. The directive adopts two different approaches to nature conservation. One is the designation and protection of particular sites (Special Areas of Conservation); the other is the protection of certain species wherever they may occur. The requirements of the directive have been transposed into British law through the Conservation (Natural Habitat, etc.) Regulations 1994. These regulations look to the planning system, and other controls, to protect the sites and to the courts (and a licensing system) to protect the species, although the presence of species may well constitute a material consideration in the determination of applications for planning permission.

Government officials were at pains to point out that the preparation of PPG 9 on *Nature Conservation* (DOE 1994a) was not directly initiated by the EC Habitats Directive. However, during the course of its preparation the significance of the directive's impact led to the publication of a revised consultation draft. It is also important to note that the final version clearly states that the guidance 'contributes to the implementation of the EC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (the Habitats Directive)' (ibid.). The text of PPG 9 makes numerous references to three EC directives: the Habitats Directive, the Birds Directive, and the Directive on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Public and Private Projects on the Environment. These references are very specific in terms of the Habitats and Birds Directives, with the actual articles of the directives cited, and the words of the directives are often replicated within the PPG. The PPG is unique at present in actually including the text of the Birds and Habitats Directives in annexes to the guidance note. It was included to ease clarification.

The EC Habitats Directive, through the statutory habitat regulations and PPG 9 of 1994, has had a very profound impact on the British planning system through the introduction of novel procedural measures and additional protection as a matter of policy. These new procedural measures include: new duties for the Secretary of State; the development of new planning guidance which prohibits the granting of planning permission in relation to a European site unless a very specific set of circumstances apply in given sequence; requiring ministers to confer with the Commission before agreeing to harmful developments affecting European sites; requiring local planning authorities to review extant planning permissions, where their implementation would be likely to have a significant effect on a site; and introducing land management considerations into the planning process.

Transport

The European Union's interest in transport measures essentially relates to the Trans-European Transport Networks (TETNs) and certain other focused

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measures, including minimum weights for lorry axle loadings on EU roads. European policy aims to promote the interconnection and inter-operability of national networks in addition to access to these networks. The designation of Trans-European Transport Networks shall take account of the need to link island, landlocked and peripheral regions with the central regions of the Community. The Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions in the United Kingdom is responsible for the inclusion of routes in the European Union's designation. It is open to question whether the designation of a route may attract additional pressures for development along its line or for access routes, but they may need to be taken into account in the decision-making process. Equally, designation of Trans-European Transport Networks may influence the priority attached to a given project, particularly where additional funding may be available. The European Union is still progressing work developing appropriate methods both for undertaking a strategic environmental assessment of the transport networks as a whole, and for corridor analysis of specific transport corridors. Strategic assessment could require the provision of additional data to the Commission by local planning authorities and have a bearing on specific development control decisions. It is very likely that the measure will, if implemented, require gathering of additional data which will be of relevance to the decision-making process.

In addition to the Trans-European Transport Networks, the Community has listed priority transport projects for European Commission funding. These include in a UK context the London–Channel Tunnel Rail Link and the Ireland–UK–Benelux Road Link. The Community is also actively considering the concept of a Citizens' Network that could have significant impacts on land use planning. This latter type of network aims to link the Trans-European Transport Networks with transport systems at a national, regional and local level, and this will have implications for the preparation of development plans.

The British national planning policy document PPG 13 *Transport* (DOE/DOT 1994) was released in March 1994 and aims, broadly, to provide guidance on the sustainable integration of land use planning and transport. The origin of the document lies in the government's desire to deal with planning, transport and sustainability problems caused, *inter alia*, by the continued growth of road transport and its associated impacts on the environment. According to officials interviewed, the document did take into account the European Community's Trans-European Transport Networks, although the decision to draft the planning guidance emanated from the British government's commitment to sustainability, as established in the White Paper *This Common Inheritance* (HM Government 1990) and subsequent drafts and the *UK Sustainable Development Strategy* (HM Government 1994). So although there may be a link between the national policy and EU transport interests, the British government at the time firmly saw the 'root'

of the document as British. Some EC directives are mentioned explicitly within PPG 13; these are those on habitats, wild birds and environmental assessment:

- EC Directive on Birds (79/409 amended by the Habitats Directive).
- EC Directive on Habitats (92/43).
- EC Directive on Assessment of Environmental Effects (85/337).

The Department of the Environment at this period saw the driving force behind PPG 13 as the need to protect the environment, although it acknowledged the need to respond to the government's international summit commitments and how they impacted upon sustainability policy measures. These have been transposed into the British land use planning system through the publication of White Papers, Statutory Instruments and Regulations, and Sustainable Development Strategies. The origin of the 'Green' initiative stems from international treaties, but in the opinion of interviewed officials, since these do not impose an explicit requirement on the British planning process, there was no requirement to mention them in an English national land use planning document. With regard to the designation of Trans-European Transport Networks, national and regional transport route developments are not included in PPG 13; rather they are contained in the British Trunk Roads Programme. Nevertheless, PPG 13 does consider the local environmental and planning impacts of transport route changes. Within Regional Planning Guidance notes (RPGs), however, the Department of Transport's Primary Road Network and the Trunk Road Programme are generally highlighted as providing the framework for new roads, road improvements and primary lorry routes.

After the publication of PPG 13 in March 1994 the Conservative government announced amendments to the way in which the Trunk Road Programme and the planning system were to be integrated, with the commitment to release a supplement to PPG 13 specifically on trunk roads. Since the Labour government took office in May 1997 a transport White Paper has been released (in July 1998) in an attempt to further harmonise sustainable development, land use and transport planning (DETR 1998a) with the aim of eventually publishing a replacement of PPG 13. But whether this new policy will contain enhanced reference to the Trans-European Transport Networks and other transport measures remains to be seen.

Coastal planning

The European Commission is involved in a number of initiatives that, from a British perspective, are broader spatial planning matters that impact on or affect the coast. These include the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Programme, the Fifth Environmental Action Programme, and the LIFE

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programme (see Chapter 4). Once again, during the course of the research, government officials made it clear that these initiatives do not impose any requirements on the British statutory land use planning process although they ‘provide the context’ for planning policies and decisions. Local planning authorities should recognise the need to accommodate the possibility of EU financing in advance in policy making by setting out broad strategies. In the words of one official, ‘Financing and resourcing matters should not be included directly within land use planning documentation.’

The English planning document PPG 20 *Coastal Planning* was released in September 1992 (DOE 1992a). The origin of the guidance lies in the Department of the Environment’s desire to deal with planning pressures in coastal zones caused by new villages, holiday resorts and oil refineries. The document did take into account the European Union’s Communication on Coastal Zones, although officials once again reiterated that the decision to draft specific coastal planning guidance did not emanate from the Commission directly. PPG 20 provides one response to EU initiatives, although it is clearly restricted to consideration of the government’s obligations toward the land use planning process, which, in itself, is narrowly defined. A number of EU measures are nevertheless explicitly mentioned in PPG 20, and these comprise:

- Directive on the Quality of Bathing Water (76/160).
- Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409).
- Directive on the Assessment of Environmental Effects (85/337).
- Directive on Urban Waste Water Treatment (91/271).
- Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (92/43).

While these directives contributed to the policy content of PPG 20, only those on birds, habitats and environmental assessment are explicitly acknowledged within national planning policy; the remainder of the directives set out in the guidance note merely reflect related EU measures and PPG 20 directs the reader to relevant circulars and non-planning legislation for further information. In consequence, they can be seen to provide the context for the British land use planning process and do not directly transpose to planning policy matters.

PPG 20 recognises that coastal zones often encompass a number of designated areas, including National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Protection Areas, Green Belts and proposed marine consultation areas, and calls on local planning authorities to develop policies within development plans to protect these areas. The direct impact of the Birds and Habitats Directives is therefore established. Officials acknowledged that some problems do exist over the

planning definition of coastal zones but the view was that this PPG is not the forum within which to debate such matters. The definition that has been used to determine the content of the policies is related to statutory land use planning: the median low water mark is legally the definition in the United Kingdom of the limit of planning on the coast. According to officials, any issues beyond this mark should be regarded as non-land use and are consequently beyond the scope of not only national planning policy but also the planning system. Once again, we see the differentiation here between the narrow (British) statutory view of planning in the preparation of plans and the control of development and the broader (EU) spatial planning process concerning the context of land use decisions. Given the importance of European spatial planning links between member states across the Channel, the North Sea and the Irish Sea, particularly since the emergence of INTERREG projects and the development of the European Spatial Development Perspective, such a distinction may seem purely academic. Nevertheless, it was established by the officials at the time responding to the then government's desire to keep EU spatial planning issues at arm's length.

Planning and pollution control

The national planning policy note PPG 23 *Planning and Pollution Control* (DOE 1994b) was released in July 1994 and may be more accurately labelled 'Planning and Pollution Control from Major Point Sources', since this is its main focus of concern. Since its publication, changes have occurred in several areas of policy which PPG 23 covers, some relating to domestic initiatives and others to EU developments; as a result, various modifications of the guidance note are being considered. This may explain why the original document lacks more formal links with the European Community. Therefore, according to officials, PPG 23's preparation was originally driven not by European developments but by events within Britain concerning conflicts between planning consents and the authorisation of facilities under pollution control legislation. In particular, there had been a number of controversial cases involving waste incinerators, where local planning authorities had attempted to impose conditions or even to refuse planning consent on grounds that were considered to overlap with pollution control functions. As a result, the Department of the Environment considered in some detail the relationship between planning controls and pollution and waste management controls, with the principal focus on industrial and waste treatment developments. The output of this examination was used as one of the bases for the production of PPG 23. Pollution control was viewed as essentially a domestic issue, and according to officials there was no reason why PPG 23 should have been influenced to any significant extent by EU policies. While PPG 23 was being drafted, however, this central focus remained in place but certain further elements were brought into the text. As a consequence, the final document

The European context

also included discussion or made reference to the subjects of waste, air quality and environmental impact assessment, each of which reflected predominantly European considerations.

The waste content of PPG 23 is the area in which influence of EU policy is most prominent. The text makes various references to the Waste Framework Directive (EC 75/442), its implementing legislation through the Waste Management Licensing Regulations 1994 and DOE Circular 11/94, which gives guidance on the meaning of the directive and the regulations. PPG 23 states that planning authorities drawing up development plans must comply with the Waste Framework Directive. The waste management hierarchy (namely reduction, reuse, recovery and disposal) and the 'proximity principle', which are included in the directive and replicated in the domestic measures of transposition, are explained and follow from the provisions contained in Article 7 of the directive. The PPG dedicates an entire chapter to the topic of development control considerations related to waste facilities. It directs planning authorities to take into account the objective of establishing an integrated and adequate network of disposal installations, enabling the European Union as a whole and individual member states to become self-sufficient. Both these objectives originate from the directive. The Waste Framework Directive had a major influence on the production of PPG 23. While there will also have been follow-on effects on actual planning activities, however, the extent of the directive's influence in practice may be limited. One reason for this is that while the PPG advises local planning authorities that they are to have regard to certain 'relevant objectives', it offers only limited interpretive guidance on how it is actually to occur during plan making and development control. This is perhaps more a problem for the integration of British statutory planning procedures and EU spatial planning issues, and the legal definition of both.

PPG 23 also refers to the European Union's air quality standards and water quality standards, and their transposition into British legislation. The guidance note acknowledges EC Directive 80/779 on sulphur dioxide and suspended particles, EC Directive 85/203 on nitrogen dioxide, EC Directive 82/884 on lead, EC Directive 76/464 on the discharge of dangerous substances to water, and EC Directive 80/68 on discharges to ground water, and the transposition Air Quality Standards Regulations 1989. However, the way in which the directives have been interpreted for domestic British law has meant that there has been minimal impact upon statutory planning system to date. Aspects of PPG 23 have now been replaced by PPG 10 *Planning and Waste Management*, released in 1999.

Business and industry

It would be expected that a national planning policy note on the subject of business and industry would possess strong implicit connections with EU

policies and programmes relating to Structural Funds and other forms of European regional assistance such as Article 10 of the European Regional Development Fund and INTERREG II. In the past other Community instruments have included RECHAR, LEADER and URBAN (Williams, 1996). The document NPPG 2 *Business and Industry* (SDD 1993) was published in September 1993 and provides planning policy guidance in Scotland on a number of land use topics relating to business and industry; these include discussion of British regional policy, European assistance, and Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise networks. A number of EC directives and initiatives are highlighted in NPPG 2 that have explicit implications for British land use planning.

The policy document contains a section dealing specifically with environmental assessment and discusses this in relation to developments in sensitive locations. Reference is made to the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1988, which lists developments that may require assessment. These regulations transpose EC Directive 85/337, with paragraph 28 of the NPPG providing a cross-reference to Scottish Development Department Circular 13/88 *Environmental Assessment: Implementation of EC Directive*. Reference is also made in NPPG 2 to the European context of policy and development. Local planning authorities are instructed to have regard to the implications of European financial assistance and the various European Structural Fund areas are highlighted at the time of drafting NPPG 2. Officials who prepared the note stressed in interview that it was impracticable within one planning document to discuss funding levels originating through EU initiatives or other specific EU programmes, since these were viewed as contextual matters and are more short-term to deal with than the life expectancy of a national planning document. In the view of the interviewed government official the preparation of NPPG 2 was based on industrial policy; there was no remit for the guidelines to deal exclusively with European Assisted Areas or European funding generally except, that is, where they impact upon land use planning policy. NPPG 2 therefore provides another example of a national planning policy note restricting European content solely to a strict interpretation of what planning is. The definition difference in planning, between the narrower definition of the British government (legal implications only) and the broader contextual definition (adopted by the European Commission), is prominent in most national and regional documents assessed.

Regional Planning Guidance

Regional Planning Guidance notes are, to an extent, all-embracing documents for each of the regions in England and possess a distinct spatial focus. The selection of a Regional Planning Guidance note was to assess the impact of the European Union on a spatially specific region within the United Kingdom.

The European context

The North East region, on the east coast of England, was chosen primarily because of its obvious interregional links with other member states of the European Union and its common border with a number of EU countries. *RPG 7 Regional Planning Guidance for the Northern Region* (DOE 1993) was published in September 1993 and covers Cleveland, Durham and Northumberland. The note's main theme is that local authorities, through their development plans, should continue to concentrate on the regeneration of the region's existing urban areas, through the attraction of employment to the area and to improve its economic base, while at the same time safeguarding the countryside, forests and coastline by pursuing specific policies. In accordance with procedural requirements at the time, the document was released by the Secretary of State for the Environment following consultation with district and county councils within the region.

The identification of European policies and/or issues within RPG 7 is difficult, since little explicit mention is made of the European Union. RPG 7 does make reference, however, to the EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (EC 70/409) and EC Structural and Regional Development Funds, but the general purpose of the document, as with all Regional Planning Guidance, is to take on board the national framework of planning, of which Europe forms a part. Consequently, government officials noted that it was for the government nationally to transpose EC directives into British legislation, and the region through the content of the Regional Planning Guidance is then required only to conform to the British (and not EC) measures. The information available in the late 1980s/early 1990s formed the basis for preparing RPG 7, and so certain EC directives released since have not been highlighted in the original note. Work is now under way on a replacement and it is expected that some of these EU measures will be included in the revised text.

Competition and economic competitiveness are underlying themes of the section of RPG 7 dealing with economic development, and specific mention is made of the European Union's single market and the opening up of competition and its impact on businesses. A number of initiatives are mentioned that have benefited from EU funding, including RENAVAL, RECHAR, the Integrated Development Operations Programme for Durham, Cleveland and south-east Northumberland and for encouraging the development of high technology. The note also encourages local authorities to recognise the potential for inward investment by formulating structure plan policies that identify prestige sites, and in this context RPG 7 makes reference to the Department of Trade and Industry's Assisted Areas in locational and financial decisions. RPG 7 provides strategic planning direction across the whole region and is first and foremost a planning document, although it was acknowledged how important it is for all officials within both local authorities and the government offices to take heed of the contents of Regional Planning Guidance. The Regional Planning Guidance notes provide a context in

themselves for the coordination, promotion and development of planning decisions that will have non-land use implications. Enhanced links between economic development officers and planning officers, for example, would be essential to coordinate sites for inward investment opportunities from both a site and a financial perspective. Regional Planning Guidance could well be used further in the future, particularly through the work of the Regional Development Agencies, to facilitate strategic collaborative working in attracting European financing through Structural Funds. The government offices will also provide a valuable role in ensuring that Single Programming Documents are consistent with the contents of Regional Planning Guidance notes, particularly with regard to resourcing and financial considerations. Since the research was undertaken RPG 7 has been partly replaced with a draft revised document.

Conclusion

This chapter has illustrated the European dimension of British planning through an assessment of national and regional planning policy guidance. Overall, it can be stated that the EC impact on British planning at these two scales has been noticeable in some policy sectors but the degree to which this impact has been acknowledged in planning statements has varied markedly between topics and over time. Even where a direct link can be established, it is frequently the case that the European origin of various initiatives is largely absent from national and regional planning policy documents (Tewdwr-Jones *et al.* 2000).

The content of Planning Policy Guidance notes, National Planning Policy Guidelines, Planning Policy Guidance (Wales) and Regional Planning Guidance can vary in the extent of references to Europe and EC directives contained within the documents, although this reflects the varied number of documents utilised in the three countries, their subject and the date of their release. A number of core EC directives are all highlighted within the English, Scottish and Welsh documents, including those on environmental assessment, wild birds, habitats and waste. However, within the Regional Planning Guidance notes, reference to EU initiatives that provide a context for planning decisions tends to exhibit greater variety both within England and when compared with their Scottish and Welsh equivalents. For example, in the later series of Regional Planning Guidance notes, and in Scotland's National Planning Policy Guidelines, reference can be found to Structural Funds; however, Planning Policy Guidance (Wales) of 1996 made no reference whatsoever to the availability of European funding for the context of Welsh local planning authorities' policy making. This illustrates a degree of inconsistency between the sets of documents in relation to contextual EU matters, and may have some implications as to the inherited documents being used by the politically devolved Assemblies in Scotland and Wales after 1999.

The European context

To date, very few replacements of the national and regional planning policy notes assessed as part of this study have been released since 1997. Of the six draft policy guidance notes released in England under the Blair government on housing, waste, regional planning, development plans, transport and flood risk, only the draft document on regional planning contains significant discussion of European issues, and this is in relation to Structural Funds and the need for coordination between Regional Planning Guidance and Single Programming Documents. Transport has not been Europeanised even though it is acknowledged that the Trans-European Transport Networks do provide a context for transport and land use development decisions.

What the national planning policy guidance in all three countries illustrates is the central government level falling behind local government's enhanced links with European regions in relation to transnational planning. Four reasons for the British governments referring to transposition measures within national and regional planning documents, rather than the original EC directives, can be suggested. First, in the interests of clarity and consistency it was considered not always desirable to refer continually to the European roots of British legislation when the requirements had been transposed. Second, there may also have been a presentational motivation for restricting continual reference to Europe. Third, it may have simply proved unnecessary in certain sectoral cases. Fourth, and more fundamentally, there may have been an inherent determination at times to keep Europe at a distance from the British planning system and to treat European spatial planning as a separate process outside Britain's statutory land use planning system.

It is our considered opinion that the reasons for the continued absence of the European dimension of British planning at the national and regional levels have stemmed from two issues: politics and definitional differences. First, in the 1980s and 1990s there appears to have been an intentional political move on the part of the Conservative government to play down the European aspect of British planning. We specifically mention the Conservative government here, since all documents assessed were drafted when the Conservatives were in office. Second, there is continued concern over the legal and definitional issues on how planning should be exactly defined. It seems that the officials who were responsible for the drafting of the policies restricted their attention to the statutory basis of planning, by considering only measures that impose a duty or an obligation on the use and development of land through a system of development plans and development control. This may appear legitimate from a narrow statutory perspective, but it does seem almost farcical to draw the distinction when so much of economic growth, major transport route investment and environmental policies is based on either European financing or European directives, yet this context has to be absent from the documents. It makes a mockery of the planning system by encouraging observers into believing that the statutory system of development plans, informed by national and regional planning guidance and implemented through

planning controls, determines the future economic prosperity, investment and sustainability of the country without a resource or financial basis.

Despite this policy vacuum at the national and regional levels of government, we are aware that aspects of European policy have nevertheless been present as an important context and determining factor in some cases in the formulation and development of planning strategies at the local level, both in Britain (Williams 1996; Batchler and Turok 1997; Bishop *et al.* 2000) and elsewhere (see, for example, Boyle 2000 in relation to Structural Funds in Ireland). Chapters 6–11 illustrate the degree to which Europe has influenced and impacted upon planning at the local level, through our assessment of a range of local authority types.

PART II

British planning in practice

Chapters 6–11 present case study profiles of six local authority areas in Britain. They were selected on the basis of a number of factors, including their participation in EU transnational cooperation, their eligibility for different forms of Structural Funds, their presence upon Trans-European Transport Networks, and for their range of local authority types. The case studies are representative of different geographical regions and, as the table illustrates, their European working. The table depicts the main European aspects of the local authorities' work; as subsequent chapters show, there may be additional European dimensions to their work. The intention in these chapters is to present descriptive profiles of each area together with detailed illustrations of the range of EU initiatives that each is involved with or eligible to receive. The length of each of the case studies varies; this reflects the degree to which different regions possess European dimensions of their work. Research in the form of data collection, document review and interviews was undertaken in 1997–8, and some changes may have occurred since. The six profiles are accompanied by a limited amount of assessment, since the purpose of these profiles is merely to illustrate the degree of European working and influence that has been present within each area. The intention is to demonstrate the European dimension at a local planning level within Britain. Discussion of the overall impact of Europe at a local planning level is provided in the assessment and review contained within Chapter 12.

Table 6.1 Local case study profiles

Area	Type	European aspect
Kent	Urban and rural maritime	INTERREG, URBAN Objective 2 Transport link Cross-border work
Northamptonshire	Urban and rural area England	Transport link
Strathclyde	Urban and rural area Scotland	RECHAR Objectives 1 and 2 Transport link Cross-border work
Mid Glamorgan	Urban and rural area Wales	RECHAR Objective 2 Transport link
Leicester	Urban provincial city	LIFE, SAVE Cross-border work
Gwynedd	Rural maritime area	INTERREG LEADER Objective 5b Transport link Cross-border work

6 Urban and rural maritime area: Kent

Kent County Council covers an area of nearly 3,800 km² and the population of Kent is just over 1.5 million. The county is divided into fourteen districts, whose populations tend to be focused in medium-size towns such as Canterbury and Maidstone. The port industry – including ferry and other port-related activity – is a major generator of wealth and employment in the county. There are six ports of significant size, together with many other smaller port facilities, and over the past twenty years Kent has secured a growing market share of UK port activity. The opening of the Channel Tunnel has intensified Kent's role as the primary gateway for travel between Britain and mainland Europe, and has had implications for investment and development pressure within the county. The construction of the Channel Tunnel was one of the catalysts which led Kent County Council to sign a cooperation agreement with its French equivalent, the Regional Council of Nord-Pas de Calais in 1987, to establish a basis for working together in the future. All these factors have encouraged Kent to promote itself as the 'European County'. Kent has attracted over £60 million of European funding since 1987 for a wide range of projects. £25 million of Structural Fund assistance has been targeted at the Thanet Objective 2 area under two successive programmes. Other important European initiatives and programmes operating in Kent are INTERREG (both I and II, reflecting the cross-border relationship established between Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais), and SAVE (encouraging energy efficiency and facilitating the creation of the East Kent Energy Agency). This chapter is structured on profiling the local authority, on the European content of development and other plans, on the range of funding Kent has received and its purpose, and other important EU-influenced activity.

Organisational structure

Kent County Council established a Corporate European Team (CET) in 1986. Initially, the team was located in the Chief Executive's Department, but in 1994 was moved to the Economic Development Department in order to bring it closer to those departments with which it is most active on European issues. The team has two main roles:

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- Representing and promoting Kent County Council to outside bodies.
- Identifying opportunities for funding. (There are currently twenty-five European programmes operating within the authority.)

Other functions of the team include collecting and disseminating information on European issues to relevant departments, communicating European matters to the people of Kent, and developing closer working links with partners abroad. The Corporate European Team has reviewed the Corporate European Strategy of the council and in 1996 it undertook an audit of how the European Strategy was implemented within the authority. Increasingly, departments are working closely with the Corporate European Team on a wide range of issues, as European decisions and policies have an increasing impact on their work. Departments have also started to develop their own European expertise. This is particularly the case with the Planning Department, which from 1997 had two full-time planning officers: a European Planning Officer and an Assistant European Planning Officer. The two officers deal with both policy and project funding, leading on INTERREG for the department and assisting project officers. The Assistant Officer also has the role of disseminating information throughout the department, and is a member of the editorial team of *Rapport*, a magazine produced by Kent County Council devoted to discussing Kent's role in Europe. The Planning Department is the third smallest in the authority, and separate from the Economic Development and Highway Departments. The split between Economic Development and Planning occurred in the late 1980s, as it was considered that economic development as a function was being given insufficient focus and the tensions with the regulatory elements of planning were inhibiting it. The two departments have retained good links with each other, facilitated by the fact that the then head of the Economic Development Department was a former member of staff of the Planning Department.

Kent Structure Plan and Waste Local Plan

The Kent Structure Plan Third Review was adopted in 1996, and the new plan and explanatory memorandum have been published. The explanatory memorandum contains a chapter entitled 'European, national and regional context', which discusses Kent's position in Europe and the international implications for the economy and the environment. The memorandum has been rewritten and updated to reflect the establishment of new programmes such as INTERREG IIC and the release of new documents, including *Europe 2000+* and the European Spatial Development Perspective. The chapter outlines Kent's 'increasing interdependence with mainland Europe', and how the Channel Tunnel, free market and increasing political cohesion of the member states will 'have a major strategic influence on the economy and functioning of the county'. Detail is provided on Trans-European Transport

Networks, the various EC directives that affect strategic planning in Kent, and the increasing importance of spatial planning. *Europe 2000, 2000+* and the European Spatial Development Perspective are described in some detail. Kent's role within Euroregion is discussed (see later in this chapter), and emphasis is placed upon how mainland Europe provides examples of land use planning which Kent can draw upon in its town centre planning and management.

The final sections of the chapter deal with Kent's economic interdependence with Europe and European transport links in more detail. The text highlights the fact that the single European market is having a 'profound effect on economic activity within the county', and increasing opportunities overall. It is anticipated that the net effect of the single European market will, in time, more than offset the loss of employment at the ferry ports. In terms of European transport links, the operation of the Channel Tunnel, Ashford International Passenger Station and – possibly within the next two years – the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) through Kent and the development of Ebbsfleet International Passenger Station will all make Kent extremely accessible to Europe, and will 'assist manufacturing, service and tourist industries within the county'. Moreover, the chapter states that the deep-sea ports of North Kent (and Sheerness and Thamesport in particular) will have 'an important role as a world gateway to Europe'. Structure Plan policies reflect Kent's international position in terms of its proximity to Europe, its ports, the Channel Tunnel, strategic road and rail networks and the ensuing development pressure. Policy S3 of the Structure Plan states that 'It is strategic policy to stimulate economic activity and employment in Kent by the growth of existing industry and commerce and the attraction of new firms, capitalising on the County's particular relationship with mainland Europe.'

At a more local level, Structure Plan policies for specific areas in Kent have an international context too. The outline proposal for Ashford, for example, states that 'provision for economic development and housing will be made so as to realise the town's role as a business investment centre capitalising on its strategic location in Europe following the opening of the Channel Tunnel, and supporting the regeneration of the East Kent economy'. The Channel Tunnel and associated development pressures are a main feature of the plan. Policies P1 to P4 in particular deal with these matters and with the Channel Tunnel Rail Link. Policy P4 states that 'the earliest possible completion of a CTRL in Kent for passengers and freight . . . linking central London and the UK regions via Thames Gateway, and the Channel Tunnel to the European high speed network, will be supported'. The Channel Tunnel Rail Link and associated pressures also feature in area proposals under Policy NK1, which highlights strategic areas for new development. These include the Swanscombe peninsula, for major mixed use development, predominantly housing, taking account of the area's relationship with the river Thames and the proposed Channel Tunnel Rail Link, and integrated with an enhanced

British planning in practice

public transport and road network; a second area is the Ebbsfleet valley, where the construction of a combined domestic and international passenger station on the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, in association with a new business centre, is proposed. In addition to the Channel Tunnel, the Channel ports feature heavily in the plan. Policies P5 to P10 deal with future development at each of the ports.

The Waste Local Plan makes considerable reference to the Framework Directive on Waste (EC 75/442 as amended by EC 91/156 and EC 91/962), and its principles of:

- Sustainable development.
- Clean production, waste reduction and minimising waste at source.
- Recycling and reuse, with a view to maximum recovery by extracting secondary raw materials or energy.
- Landfill as a last resort.
- A high level of environmental protection.
- Self-sufficiency in waste disposal.

The Waste Local Plan's strategy therefore 'draws upon the environmental principles and policies of both the EU and the government, as well as the County Council's own environment programme'. The objectives of the plan therefore have regard to the objectives of Articles 3, 4 and 5 of the EC Waste Directive in particular. This refers to the need for policy support and land provision for alternatives to the traditional method of disposal, landfill, and attention will instead be directed to separation, reduction and reprocessing for different kinds of discarded materials, and also bulking/transfer points. Waste to energy is a process particularly supported by EU and government policies. (Article 3 of the Framework Directive on Waste states that member states are to take measures to 'encourage the use of waste as a source of energy'.) This is reflected in policy W11 of the Waste Local Plan, which states that: 'Proposals for waste to energy plants will be supported in principle. The following locations are considered to be suitable in principle . . . adjacent to: the Medway at Halling; the Medway at Kingsnorth; the Swale at Kemsley; and the Stour at Richborough'. Appendix 1 of the Waste Local Plan provides more detail on relevant EU, national and regional policies. In addition to the Framework Directive on Waste, the appendix gives details of *Europe 2000*, the Fifth Environmental Action Programme and the Euroregion Environment Charter. *Europe 2000*, for example, concludes that the best long-term solution for waste involves waste reduction and recycling; the Fifth Environmental Action Programme recognises that the upward trend in waste generation must be reversed, and identifies specific actions to encourage this; and the Euroregion Environment Charter commits Euroregion partners to discuss and resolve environmental problems together whenever a joint approach is indicated.

Structural Funds

Thanet was awarded Objective 2 status in July 1993, in recognition of the high unemployment in the area relative to the EU average, and the decline in industrial employment. The Objective 2 programme has received £25 million in European funding since 1994 – £11 million going to the 1994–6 programme (of which £3 million was ring-fenced for the Ramsgate Approach Road), and £14 million to the recently completed 1997–9 programme. Thanet covers an area of 103.1 km² and has a population of nearly 130,000. In October 1996 the unemployment rate in Thanet was 12.3 per cent (50 per cent above the average UK level and over 20 per cent above the average EU level). The main towns in the area are Margate, Broadstairs and the port of Ramsgate. Ramsgate has been particularly affected by the opening of the Channel Tunnel, as freight traffic has been drawn away from all Kent ports to the tunnel. The Thanet Objective 2 Single Programming Document (SPD) was compiled by Thanet District Council Planning Department, Kent County Council and the Government Office for the South East, none of whom had any previous experience of writing European programme documents. Both the current and the previous Single Programme Documents have had a strong planning context, important for Thanet because the boundaries of the Objective 2 area coincide with those of the district.

Section 1.4 of the Single Programme Document contains a profile of the development plan for Thanet – comprising both the Kent Structure Plan Third Review and the Isle of Thanet Local Plan. The Kent Structure Plan Third Review, adopted formally on 14 February 1997, represents the strategic planning framework for the county up to 2011. The Single Programme Document recognises the role that the Structure Plan plays in promoting economic development in Thanet and highlights the policies of particular relevance (S3 and EK2). The Isle of Thanet Local Plan comprises the rest of the development plan for Thanet, and develops Structure Plan policy into more detailed policies and proposals. The Local Plan was adopted by the end of 1997 and was considered necessary in view of the significant changes that have occurred in Thanet over the last five years. When the original 1984 Local Plan was conceived, Thanet was not in receipt of European funding, nor did it have Development Area status. The new district-wide Local Plan aims to reflect these changes and make the most of the opportunities they provide.

The SPD also provides information on environmental assessment, particularly on the implementation of the European Community Directive on environmental impact assessment (EC Directive 85/337) through the Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1988. Section 1.5 of the SPD relates to the legal and administrative framework within which it operates. The document states that 'the preparation of this SPD and its implementation take place in the context of a well-established

land use planning system which balances environmental and economic factors'. The planning system (and particularly plan preparation procedure) is then described in some detail. This is followed by a brief overview of the approaches of the Structure Plan and Local Plan to Thanet. With respect to the Structure Plan, the SPD states that 'the approach . . . is one of ensuring an adequate supply of sites for new business and tourist development in Thanet and providing continued support for the development of Manston Airport and Port of Ramsgate.' The twin strategies of encouraging economic growth and diversification and environmental enhancement are followed through in the Isle of Thanet Local Plan.

Land allocation for economic growth is facilitated by policies in both the Structure Plan and the Local Plan. The district-wide Local Plan states in its foreword that it will 'play a major role in identifying land for employment and unashamedly makes the case for providing a wide range of employment sites to make the best use of opportunities'. The plan acknowledges the Objective 2 status, Development Area status and Rural Development Area status of Thanet, and recognises that demand for business premises will exceed, by a considerable amount, that experienced over the last few years. Already the number of planning applications received by Thanet District Council has increased – the authority received 30 per cent more in fees from applications in 1996–7, for example, than it had forecast.

The fundamental aim of the 1997–9 Objective 2 programme has been to continue to support the economic regeneration of Thanet in order to create and sustain employment for local people and reduce the disparities between the Thanet economy and that of Kent and the rest of the South East. To achieve this aim, four priorities were identified:

- Building on small and medium-sized enterprises and indigenous potential.
- Community economic development.
- Tourism and cultural industries.
- To specifically carry forward an objective from the 1994–6 programme that recognised the need to support the delayed implementation of the Ramsgate Harbour Access Road project.

As has been the case in other areas in receipt of European funding, Thanet has experienced a change in direction between the first and second Objective 2 programme periods. The first programme placed emphasis on site development to create employment opportunities and on the development of tourism in Thanet. The second programme put less emphasis on infrastructure and more on 'social contact', for example vocational training and bringing those excluded from employment back into it. However, as in other Objective 2 areas, there is still a need for infrastructural work. This is particularly true of Thanet, which has not had the benefit of European funding for as long as

other areas. Infrastructural investment is especially needed for the central, predominantly agricultural, part of Thanet, where Kent International Airport and a series of business parks are planned.

INTERREG

The INTERREG programme was launched in 1990 to promote the economic development of border regions and to assist them in gaining the most benefit from European integration (see Chapter 2). Kent was the first county in Great Britain to access INTERREG funding. Kent County Council and the Regional Council of Nord–Pas de Calais had signed a protocol of cooperation in April 1987, which aimed to establish a basis for working together in the future, in order to maximise the benefits to the two regions whilst addressing any negative consequences from the inevitable changes in the local economies, and seeking to protect the natural environment on both sides of the Channel. Following this agreement came a joint study which established the basis of the INTERREG I programme. Under INTERREG I, which ran from 1991 to 1994, Kent received £6.4 million. There were six sub-programmes under which about 100 projects were submitted. The sub-programmes were:

- Transport and infrastructure.
- Regeneration and the environment.
- Economic development.
- Training and education.
- Tourism.
- Technical assistance.

In its review of the INTERREG I programme, the INTERREG II Operational Programme of 1995 stated that although the local authorities had no previous experience of joint working, they nevertheless built links during the programme period, primarily through the carrying out of regeneration projects as a joint response to the effects of the Channel Tunnel, sharing experience of common problems and learning from different approaches. This process encouraged close links to develop, and some local authorities have now signed cooperation agreements (for example, Dunkerque–Ramsgate, Calais–Dover, Boulogne–Folkestone, and Wimereux–Herne Bay). Kent County Council's environment and planning department was involved in ten projects under the first round of INTERREG I, including the Stour River Corridor Management project (a cross-border exchange of practical experience in river corridor and natural park countryside management) and the Intercoast project (a jointly managed series of events on both sides promoting awareness of ecology and green tourism).

British planning in practice

The second INTERREG programme of 1994–9 was intended to further strengthen links established under INTERREG I, and to achieve this Kent was allocated £14.2 million. There were four strategic objectives for the programme:

- To encourage the emergence of an integrated ‘Transmanche Region’, with high-quality communication links. One of the ways to achieve this objective is through encouraging the French and British authorities to work together on planning issues, regarding the border area as an integrated geographical zone.
- To improve the attractiveness of the Transmanche region in order to develop sustainable growth.
- To minimise the negative effects of the redistribution of maritime traffic and encourage the economic and technological development of the Transmanche Region.
- To develop and promote the networks of relations between players on both sides of the Channel.

Both UK and French partners were concerned to take on board the lessons learned from INTERREG I, particularly in respect of the feasibility of certain types of projects – tourism and environmental projects especially were considered to require a stricter selection process in order for them to meet transfrontier criteria. To look more vigorously at project proposals for INTERREG II, an Internal Scrutiny Panel was established that ran for approximately eighteen months prior to the closing date for submission of projects in round one. The panel consisted of the European Planning Officer, the head of the Environment and Planning Department, a finance group representative, and on occasions a representative of the Corporate European Team. The panel’s role was to look at INTERREG projects in terms of the overall priorities of the Planning Department – for example, County Council core values, the Structure Plan and other strategic planning documents, although local plan policies were not considered. As well as ensuring that projects met the overall policy priorities of the department, the panel were also looking for projects that stood a reasonable chance of success and checking that both finance and matching funding stood up.

The Planning Department also had considerable involvement in the preparations for INTERREG IIC. The European Planning Officer was primarily responsible for this work, inputting local authority views and providing assistance to the International Planning Division. He was also a member of the International Working Party for the programme – a grouping of the seven member states involved (the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, Ireland and the Netherlands), working together to achieve a cross-member states’ common operational programme.

Other European initiatives

IMPACT

IMPACT (IMProvement ACTion) is Kent County Council's environment and regeneration initiative – an attempt to get the most out of the council's environment programme through targeting specific areas and linking this with economic regeneration. The IMPACT team locate in the targeted area for a specified time period (approximately three years), and provide a very hands-on approach to regeneration. In order to achieve this, IMPACT works closely with district councils and local organisations. The first two IMPACT projects were in Gravesend and Ramsgate, and these were funded from Kent County Council and the district council (plus a small amount of private funding). The IMPACT team consists of a mixture of planners, architects, community liaison officers and administrators. The team handles everything from project design and consultation to project implementation and supervision on the ground. Politically the team is managed by a committee comprising representatives of the county and district councils.

IMPACT began work in Dover and Deal in 1993, shortly before the INTERREG programme began in Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais. The IMPACT team realised that the regeneration of the coastal port towns – refocusing them, adapting their outlook to a new future, improving their infrastructure, etc. – was a valid objective for the INTERREG programme. IMPACT's first INTERREG proposal was therefore for an all-embracing regeneration of all the coastal resorts and ports, encompassing all the issues facing them. The secretariat responsible for appraising UK projects considered that the bid would be more effective if it was divided up into separate bids (for example, to cover Dover and Calais, Folkestone and Boulogne, Herne Bay and Wimereux, etc.), and IMPACT devoted a further six to nine months reassembling the separate bids to meet this request. The first IMPACT project under INTERREG, in Dover and Calais, was completed in 1997. The partnership began in 1993, when an agreement was signed between the two towns. The agreement represented closer cooperation between Dover and Calais, and set out the key aims of a strategy of action and exchange. The three aims were:

- Improving European gateways.
- Rehabilitating and regenerating urban centres.
- Improving the strength of the tourism product and reinforcing visitor welcome.

The achievement of these aims has required close collaboration between the local authorities and partnership agencies in Dover and Calais, such as IMPACT and ORETUR (IMPACT's equivalent in Calais). The Dover-Calais

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partnership has continued under the latest INTERREG programme, although IMPACT will no longer be involved. IMPACT moved its team to Folkestone, to implement a series of schemes there aimed at improving the quality of the environment and setting the standard for the future. Approximately £450,000 of INTERREG money has been received for the project.

SAVE II programme

Kent County Council's bid under the SAVE II programme has been in conjunction with the county of Halland in Sweden. Both Kent and Halland face similar problems – high levels of unemployment and a lack of their own energy resources, for example – and both regions have a high potential for renewable energy sources. The SAVE II programme aims to assist in the exchange of information and experience between the regions. The Regional Energy Agency of Kattégatt in Halland is responsible for the overall coordination of the programme, the main priority of which has been the establishment of the East Kent Energy Agency. For this purpose, Kent County Council has received European funding of £120,000. The authority covers all five East Kent districts – Thanet, Dover, Canterbury, Shepway and Ashford – and has three objectives:

- To encourage energy efficiency within small and medium-sized enterprises.
- To encourage energy efficiency and conservation in social housing.
- To take forward Kent's potential for renewable energy.

Coastal and ports strategy

Kent has approximately 350 miles of extremely varied coastline. Over the past six years the County Council has tried to raise awareness of the importance and fragility of the coast, and has been looking at how coastal issues could be incorporated into strategic and local policy, where there has been little tradition of doing so. (Some local plans, for example, pay insufficient regard to coastal regions.) Coastal planning in Britain is hampered by the necessity to produce a whole suite of non-statutory initiatives, among which are coastal zone management plans, estuary management plans and shoreline management plans. These have no legal standing within the planning system, and so it is very difficult for coastal planning to be adequately taken into account. Furthermore, many coastal issues are not related to land use and are not spatially resolvable. In North Kent, for instance, there is the problem of a rapidly sinking coast and concomitant loss of salt marsh islands. The coast is a movable entity and ways need to be found to encapsulate this mobility into the static statutory planning system. Awareness raising may be

the first part of the process, and the INTERREG programme has been a major catalyst for this objective.

The House of Commons Environment Committee in 1992 recognised that the greatest problem facing coastal areas was the multiplicity of agencies and organisations responsible for action on the coast, and the need to develop an approach that cuts across sectional perspectives. The County Council's strategy has therefore been

directed primarily towards encouraging and supporting cross-sectoral partnerships, where the responsibility for action rests largely with others . . . this approach has been responsible in large part for a number of innovative initiatives which have won financial support from central government, advisory agencies, the private sector and the European Commission.

(Kent Coast Strategy document)

The Environment and Planning Department has compiled a summary of coastal projects and their funding. £111,760 was received from the INTERREG programme between 1992 and 1997, as part funding of the Kent Coast Strategy. Projects implemented with funding under INTERREG I have included:

- *Our Common Shore: the Coasts and Seas of Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais*, a study written jointly by Kent County Council and the Regional Council of Nord-Pas de Calais, which assesses the sustainable development of the Transmanche coast.
- Detailed analyses of coastal issues that have appeared in three joint editions of *Larus*, the journal of the Observatoire de l'Environnement Littoral et Marin, based in Wimereux.
- The Norwich Union Coastwatch – a scheme for monitoring beach cleanliness.
- A definitive gazetteer of habitats of significance for wildlife along the Kent coast – *Coastal Habitats in Kent* – published in 1996 and intended to guide the formulation of development plans.
- An inventory of maritime archaeological sites in the county.
- Sixteen waste reception facilities.

It is anticipated that the successes of the INTERREG I programme for coastal management will be repeated once INTERREG II is assessed. In particular, in 1998 it was planned that INTERREG II funding would facilitate the establishment of a Coastal and Marine Observatory in Kent, modelled on the Observatoire de l'Environnement Littoral et Marin, based in Wimereux. As part of INTERREG I, one of Kent County Council's actions was to undertake a feasibility study into setting up an observatory in Kent. The study recommended the establishment of a Coastal and Marine Observatory in Dover to

‘act primarily as an interface between the scientific and technical community, decision-makers in the private and public sectors, and local communities and voluntary groups’.

European legislation has had a direct impact on the coast, in terms of both designations (such as Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas; see the Lappel Bank case study later in this chapter), and directives. The Bathing Water Directive and the Urban Waste Water Directive have been immensely significant in helping change the perception of the coast and the way it is used, by looking at how, in planning terms, areas that were previously very polluted can be reconsidered. In the Medway estuary, for example, the water quality of the river Swale has improved from Grade C to Grade B and this has had implications for the shellfish industry there. Prior to the EC directives, shellfish had to be taken from the Swale to Tenby (in South Wales) for six weeks, to allow them to filter through clean water. With the improvement in the water quality in the Swale, this is no longer necessary.

The Kent Ports Strategy, published in May 1996, was prepared by Kent County Council, Kent’s ferry operators, the port authorities and Eurotunnel. The aim of the study was to address issues associated with the opening of the Channel Tunnel and the growth of international traffic in the county. The strategy is the first stage of a joint study with the Regional Council of Nord-Pas de Calais, funded under the INTERREG programme, with the aim of developing a common approach to the issues associated with cross-Channel travel. It considers the changing role of the Kent ports, market developments, competition between the Channel Tunnel and the ports, the possibilities of port specialisation and diversification, and various road and rail traffic issues. In examining these issues, the strategy highlights the European influences thus far and those likely to arise in the future on Kent and its ports, and road and rail networks. These include road and rail policies that are being developed by the European Union in the form of Trans-European Transport Networks, a combined rail transport policy, a short-sea shipping policy and a ports policy. Other influences have included the single European market and the fact that Kent has secured a growing share of European trade.

The strategy recognises that the European Union has a potentially very important role to play in its implementation, including extracting funding from the INTERREG programme (for East Kent ports under Thanet’s Objective 2 area status) and through the designation of European transport routes. The strategy makes a number of suggestions and recommendations about a range of market and transport issues. Recommendations include:

- High priority to be given by central government and the European Union to investment in Kent infrastructure to match the cross-Channel capacity.
- Development of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link to broaden Tunnel competition.

- Seeking European funding and matching UK funding to finance *ad hoc* projects, such as the Ramsgate Harbour Approach Road.
- Focus on Dover–Calais as a major ferry route in Kent.
- Scope for increasing total cross-Channel traffic by the joint promotion of Kent and Nord–Pas de Calais as a major tourist destination; in parallel there is a proposal to encourage Anglo-Belgian and Anglo-Dutch tourism.

Another project, the East Kent Initiative (EKI), a public–private sector partnership, was established in December 1991 by the Channel Tunnel Joint Consultative Committee. The initiative was a response to the document entitled *The Kent Impact Study*, a study led by Kent County Council on behalf of all the local authorities in Kent and in conjunction with the government and private sector, which looked at the economic impact on Kent of the Channel Tunnel. The East Kent area was recognised as having serious economic problems, highlighted by the area’s dependence upon the cross-Channel ferry industry. Dynamic action to adjust the economy in the area was considered to be necessary, and the study recommended establishing a task force to coordinate the response to economic development issues and to develop East Kent’s business opportunities.

A European key area was identified in 1993, in response to the increasing amount of European funding that was coming in (particularly through the INTERREG programme) and also in response to the importance of Kent’s link with Nord–Pas de Calais. The initiative is coordinated by a council, comprising a mixture of representatives from the public and private sectors, including the chief executives of each of the district councils of East Kent, plus lead officers from local quangos, and representatives of Kent. The council is responsible for setting the overall strategy of the organisation. The initiative has the responsibility of coordinating all the funding activities from Europe in the East Kent area, and this covers Thanet’s Objective 2 funding, and the SME, PESCA, KONVER and INTERREG Community initiatives. In view of the initiatives’ European function, it is important that the organisation has access to information on European affairs. In terms of policy, Kent’s Brussels office is an indispensable source of information. The office is responsible for representing Kent’s interests in Europe and also for feeding back information both formally and informally.

The East Kent Initiative has experienced considerable success. Its example has encouraged the formation of a similar partnership in Nord–Pas de Calais, where the impact of the Channel Tunnel on local economies has also been recognised. The ports of Boulogne, Calais and Dunkerque have formed their own sub-regional organisation – the Syndicat Mixte de la Côte d’Opale (SMCO). The East Kent Initiative and SMCO are now working in partnership to make the most of the opportunities offered by the Channel Tunnel, and to counteract any possible job losses in the ferry industries. A formal agreement was signed by elected representatives of local authorities from

the two partnerships in May 1995. The SMCO was enlarged in the late 1990s to include other partner agreements between the two regions, including the existing link between the towns of Etaples and Whitstable.

Networks and partnerships

Apart from the transnational programmes already referred to, Kent County Council has forged other important partnerships. The two main partnerships at the macro scale are Euroregion and the Arc Manche Partnership. Euroregion was established by a joint memorandum of understanding on 21 June 1991, and comprises Kent, Nord-Pas de Calais in France and Flanders, Brussels-Capital and Wallonia in Belgium. Euroregion was a response to the single market, European integration, cross-Channel links, Europe-wide networks, the problems of economic convergence, the congestion of the central area of Europe, the tendency to environmental degradation and the various challenges these issues represent. Instrumental in the creation of Euroregion were the relationships built up through the three separate INTERREG programmes operating in the area – all involving Nord-Pas de Calais in partnerships with Kent, Flanders and Wallonia. This regional grouping aims to promote the area it covers and develop projects of mutual importance and common interest. According to officials at Kent County Council, Euroregion is recognised by the European Union as one of the first few concrete examples of joint cooperation between local authorities, and is a model which the European Commission wishes to encourage in the future.

The Euroregion is a registered European Economic Interest Group, run under the auspices of a college of members consisting of five elected representatives from the five regions. An executive council and five working groups at officer level report to this group. The five working groups are:

- Group 1 – economic development, technological and industrial cooperation.
- Group 2 – strategic planning and major infrastructure.
- Group 3 – environment.
- Group 4 – personnel training and exchanges.
- Group 5 – public relations and promotions.

The Planning Department at Kent County Council has been involved in Groups 2 and 3. The strategic planning and infrastructure group was responsible for compiling the document *A Vision for Euroregion*, one of the principal outputs of the Euroregion partnership. The production of this document was co-financed by EC DG XVI under Article 10 of the European Regional Development Fund. *A Vision for Euroregion*, produced in English, French and Dutch, is intended as the first step in the process of understanding

the issues, problems and changes taking place across the Euroregion. The key topic areas that emerged in the document were population, economy and employment, transport, the environment and spatial planning. Under the spatial planning section, the different planning systems across the Euroregion are briefly outlined. The document states that ‘all the regions in the Euroregion are . . . now giving more priority to regional and interregional planning. This new trend enables a longer-term view to be taken for the planning and development of this region, which this document is aimed at facilitating.’

The Arc Manche Partnership operates on a similar spatial scale to Euroregion. Arc Manche comprises the French regions and British counties bordering the English Channel, namely Dorset, Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, West Sussex, East Sussex, Kent, Bretagne, Basses-Normandie, Haute-Normandie, Picardie and Nord-Pas de Calais, with Cornwall, Devon and Essex as observers. These regions have agreed to come together to explore issues of common interest and to provide a common framework for jointly tackling some of the problems and issues on shared borders. In particular, Arc Manche aims to:

- Gain recognition of the uniqueness of the Channel area.
- Develop a shared approach to the future of the Channel area.
- Achieve closer integration between the regions bordering the Channel in the building of Europe.
- Develop local economies and communities.
- Provide a framework for cooperation between the regions on shared issues.

The organisational structure of the partnership is relatively informal, relying mainly on the collective efforts of the individual regions. The structure comprises a committee of presidents that meets annually to discuss common interests, priorities and projects, and to set an annual work programme. Beneath it are a number of transnational working groups focusing on specific issues, such as strategic and spatial planning, the transport and communications infrastructure, environmental and coastal issues, and economic development and employment. Finally, there is a management committee comprising the officers responsible for European activities in each of the regions together with the chairs of the working groups. The committee decides on the programmes of action, priorities and time scales for the working groups, plus ensuring co-ordination between the different groups.

Development control

The biggest influences on the development control process in general have been the EC’s Environmental Assessment Directive, the Habitats and Birds Directives, and the Waste Framework Directive. For Kent County Council,

however, the Environmental Assessment Directive did not have as great an impact on the planning process as it otherwise might have because such assessments were already being undertaken for large development projects. The Waste Framework Directive has had an influence on the types of planning application being received. The following example of development control provides an interesting illustration of the impact of Europe on British statutory planning.

The decision in 1995 to refuse planning permission for a quarry in the Tonbridge and Malling District of Kent was partly influenced by the EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds. The application was for the extraction of ragstone from a 43.2 ha site forming part of a woodland called Oaken Wood. The quarry was then to be restored by backfilling with inert waste followed by the establishment of a recycling facility on the site. The Oaken Wood site is not subject to any national or local policy designations on landscape grounds; however, it is identified on the provisional *Inventory of Kent's Ancient Woodlands* (1990), published jointly by English Nature, the Kent Trust for Nature Conservation and Kent County Council as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest and has been subject to a tree preservation order. The site also constitutes a valuable habitat for nightjars, a species protected by the EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds, and objections to the quarry proposal were therefore made on the grounds of the national and international importance of Oaken Wood for nature conservation.

In a member's briefing note, prepared for a site visit on 14 September 1994, the overall purpose of the Birds Directive is described. The note states that:

special conservation measures concerning the habitat of the nightjar should be taken by the government. The government stated, in Circular 27/87 on Nature Conservation, that this Directive would be met by the designation of Areas of Special Protection, National Nature Reserves, and the creation of a national network of SSSIs. However, the Directive still applies outside of such designated areas, where member states should also strive to avoid pollution or deterioration of habitats.

The directive applied under Policies ENV 2 and ENV 6 of the Structure Plan Third Review and the planning officer recommended to the planning sub-committee that permission should be refused on three grounds, one of which was that the proposed development would be contrary to the policies intended to protect sites from development which would materially harm their nature conservation interest. The following case study provides a further example of planning control dilemmas.

Lappel Bank is an area of intertidal mudflats immediately adjoining, at its northern end, the port of Sheerness. The mudflats provide a breeding and overwintering habitat for a number of internationally important bird species. However, Lappel Bank was also the only area into which the port of Sheerness

could realistically envisage expanding. In 1993 the Secretary of State designated the Medway estuary and marshes, an area into which Lappel Bank falls, as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the EC Habitats Directive. Lappel Bank itself, however, was excluded from the designated area on economic grounds to allow for the proposed expansion of the port of Sheerness. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) challenged the government's decision in the UK courts, and the House of Lords referred the case to the European Court of Justice. On 11 July 1996 the European Court found that the UK government had acted illegally when Lappel Bank was excluded from the Medway Estuary Special Protection Area for economic reasons. The strategic planning provided by the Kent Structure Plan Third Review states in Policy P8 that:

In order to realise the economic potential of the deep water berths at Sheerness and Thamesport, development proposals for the expansion of these ports for cross-Channel and deep sea traffic will be encouraged and will normally be permitted.

More detail regarding the expansion of Sheerness port was given in the Sheerness, Queenborough and Minster Local Plan, adopted by Swale Borough Council on 19 January 1988. Proposal 4.1A relates specifically to Lappel Bank, and states that the reclamation of the Lappel Bank for port development will be encouraged. In 1989 a planning application for the expansion of Sheerness port into the Lappel Bank area was received by Swale Borough Council, and planning permission was granted. Development was already under way by the time of the SPA designation. However, the SPA designation carries with it a legal requirement for a rigorous examination of potentially damaging proposals and compensation for any loss or damage to the habitat. The RSPB maintained that Lappel Bank 'was destroyed without the required analysis or habitat compensation'.

The two opposing views in the Lappel Bank case each have an international context – an internationally important wetland versus the international importance of a strategic port. Sheerness is primarily a deep-sea port, and specialises in handling trade cars, fresh produce, forest products and steel. The port is one of only three deep-water locations in the South East region that can provide access for modern container ships (the other two are Southampton and Felixstowe), and is also of international importance in terms of serving the Centre Capitals region of Europe. The expansion of Sheerness is therefore a matter of both national and international interest, particularly if the United Kingdom wishes to compete with the ports of Antwerp and Rotterdam. The Kent Ports Strategy states that the opportunity to provide a major transshipment facility in Kent, servicing the UK mainland as well as a large part of the European hinterland from this ideal South East England location, increases with developments currently under way at the port of Sheerness. However, future development is now constrained by the

creation of the Medway Estuary Special Protection Area. Lappel Bank provided a vital habitat for a number of wader and wildfowl species, including shelduck, ringed plover, grey plover, dunlin and redshank. The judgment of the European Court described Lappel Bank as an important component of the overall estuarine eco-system and stated that the loss of that intertidal area would probably result in a reduction in the wader and wildfowl populations of the Medway estuary and marshes.

The European Court ruled in favour of the RSPB, stating that 'a member state may not, when designating a Special Protection Area and defining its boundaries, take account of economic requirements as constituting a general interest superior to that represented by the ecological objective of Directive 79/409'. The Lappel Bank decision will clearly have implications for port development at other estuary locations in the United Kingdom, most notably at Dibden Bay in Southampton Water and at the Orwell estuary in Suffolk. There are also implications for SAC designations under the Habitats Directive. The future development and expansion of the port of Ramsgate, for example, could possibly be constrained by the presence of a candidate Special Area of Conservation. In response to the Court's decision, the RSPB stated that 'economics do not determine where wildlife sites are and should never be a consideration when they are designated . . . If the government had been allowed to get away with the destruction of Lappel Bank, the future of many other wildlife sites would have been bleak'.

7 Urban and rural area of England: Northamptonshire

Northamptonshire lies in the heart of England, midway between London and Birmingham, covers 236,913 ha and has a population of 604,400 (mid-1996 estimate). The county has good communication links, with direct rail services to London, Gatwick Airport, the Midlands, the North West and Scotland, and major road access via the M1, M40 and the A14 (M1–A1 link road). Over the past fifty years there has been considerable development and population growth in the county, particularly in the main towns of Corby, Daventry, Kettering, Northampton and Wellingborough. Nevertheless, Northamptonshire remains predominately rural, with agricultural land covering 80 per cent of the county. The former major local industries of farming, shoe-making and steelworking have been increasingly replaced by high-technology, service and engineering enterprises. Northampton is the main urban centre, with a population of 189,700. Northamptonshire County Council receives assistance from a number of EU programmes, and meets the criteria for eligibility of the RETEX Community Initiative. The council was chosen as a case study primarily because of the Trans-European Transport Network (Euro-route 28) passing through the county, with the aim of assessing whether this designation had increased development pressure in its vicinity. This chapter considers the organisational aspect and then goes on to discuss the preparation of plans and strategies, the development of networks, the nature of European programmes operating in Northamptonshire, and the impact of the Trans-European Transport Network.

Organisational structure

At the corporate level, Northamptonshire County Council operates a European Officers' Group, the chairman of which is the lead officer of the

Economic Development and European Affairs Sub-committee. The European Officers' Group contains representatives from all departments within the County Council, and meets four times a year. The group undertakes joint working to push forward European activity for the council, for example by producing corporate European goals. Agenda items of this kind are usually considered by the Chief Officer's management team before going before the elected members. There is a corporate European budget of £25,000 (at 1997), of which £20,000 was earmarked for funding the East Midlands Counties European office. Additional funding for this initiative comes from local sponsors (who receive information on Europe-based activities in return). Transnational cooperation is taken seriously within the County Council and a twinning action plan has been completed. Various towns within the local authority area have their own twinning arrangements. Northampton, for example, has a relationship with Poitiers, and the two cities are part of the 'Sesame Network' (an economic development network).

The Planning and Transportation Department comprises twenty-nine branches, each with separate functions. Of particular interest is the Economic Development Unit, responsible for the County Council's economic development activities and policies which promote and sustain the local economy, and for European matters on behalf of the Planning and Transportation Department. The unit reports to the Economic Development and European Affairs Sub-committee. The unit also provides European information, operates EC business cooperation programmes, organises European events and coordinates the European Social Fund on behalf of local authorities in Northamptonshire.

European Action Plans

The County Council has adopted four corporate European goals, to which all departments are expected to contribute. The goals are:

- *Economic issues.* To assist the development of the Northamptonshire economy by optimising the benefits and opportunities which accrue from the Single European Act and other European legislation and initiatives and to assist local businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, by providing information and advice about the European trading environment.
- *Social cohesion and cultural issues.* For the County Council to play its full role in the formation of social cohesion within the European Union and to work against the exclusion of certain groups from mainstream society. This will entail the creation and development of a wide variety of cultural, sporting, educational and social links with European partners.
- *Information provision.* To provide access to relevant, appropriate and accurate information, and advice on European matters, for all individuals

and agencies in the local community, for staff and elected members of the County Council and organisations with which it works. To raise awareness through dissemination enabling individual and collective responses.

- *Networks.* To participate actively in relevant networks and organisations relating to European matters in order to safeguard the interests of Northamptonshire.

Since 1995 all departments have produced European Action Plans in order to contribute to the achievement of these corporate European goals. The 1997–8 European Action Plan for the Planning and Transportation Department has, as its overall aim, ‘To maximise the benefits and opportunities which accrue from the European Union, for the socio-economic well-being of Northamptonshire’. The department seeks to realise this aim through ‘fully embracing the “spirit of Europe”’, through the following objectives:

- Information provision and awareness raising of the role and impact of the European Commission and other major European institution’s activities.
- Actively pursue EU funding opportunities and other initiatives, thereby obtaining optimum benefit for Northamptonshire as a whole.
- Safeguard Northamptonshire’s interests in relation to European affairs through active participation in various local, regional, national and international networks, as well as lobbying and responding to emerging EU policy and legislation.

Networks and partnerships

The Planning and Transportation Department has been involved in a number of networks, in line with the fourth corporate European goal of the County Council. These are:

- Participation in the East Midland Counties European Officer Network. This group coordinates and administers aspects of European funding on behalf of public authorities in the East Midlands.
- Renewed participation in the PARTENALIA network, a network of European regions.
- Pursuing the potential transnational links between the Formula One/ Northamptonshire Automobile industry and similar centres throughout Europe with the possibility of accessing ERDF Article 10 finance.
- Waste management strategy. In October 1996 officers visited the Waste Management Unit in DG XI of the European Commission to discuss

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the European Community Strategy for Waste Management and the Landfill Directive, with specific regard to the implications for Northamptonshire.

European initiatives and funding

Northamptonshire has been eligible for limited money from the European Social Fund, but it has recently been significantly reduced. The Planning and Transportation Department is responsible for the coordination of ESF monies on behalf of Northamptonshire local authorities. Under the European Social Fund nine schemes were approved in 1996, for example, receiving total funding of £150,192. Examples of these bids are highlighted below under their respective departments.

Education Department bids

PHARE provides technical and economic assistance to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Funding has been received for curriculum development training for Polish teachers. Another scheme, 'Youth For Europe', a youth and residential service, received £12,600 between 1995 and 1997 to support the development and implementation of youth exchanges with other member states and with Hungary and Belarus in Eastern and Central Europe.

Social Services bids

Under the TIDE initiative, the Social Services Department submitted a bid to the disabled and elderly section of the Telematics programme in 1996, to examine the impact of new and existing technology, access to information systems and training for two groups of carers. Partners included Portsmouth University in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Portugal and Greece. The bid was worth £3.5 million over three years, of which the Northamptonshire element was about £900,000. The bid reached the final selection stage, but was unsuccessful. A further bid was prepared under TIDE II in 1997 for a new project which aims to investigate the impact of technology on Alzheimer sufferers and their carers. Partners were included from Norway, Scotland, Dublin, Finland and the Netherlands.

Other bids

Northamptonshire meets the criteria of eligibility for the RETEX Community Initiative. RETEX (the community initiative for areas affected by the structural decline of the textile and clothing industries) required, as criteria of eligibility:

- 2,000 employed in the textile and clothing industries (Northamptonshire had 10,000 employed in the footwear industry).
- More than 10 per cent of the industrial work force employed in the industry (Northamptonshire had 15 per cent).
- More than 2,000 job losses (Northamptonshire has experienced 20,000, of which 3,000 were between 1990 and 1993).

However, Northamptonshire did not receive funding, primarily because it lacks Objective Area status. Despite this setback, Northamptonshire County Council hopes to receive funding under the INTERREG programme and will be making further bids under this initiative in due course.

Trans-European Transport Networks

Euro-route 28, the Ireland–Benelux road network and one of the Trans-European Transport Networks, runs through Northamptonshire from east to west. The road (the A14) is dual carriageway, and extends from junction 19 of the M1 to the A1 near Huntingdon, from where it continues to Felixstowe and Harwich. The completion of the A14 has opened up the potential for significant industrial and commercial development along this strategic east–west communication corridor within Northamptonshire. There has already been increased development pressure along the A14 as a result of a combination of factors, including the improved accessibility provided by the road and the relative lower land values in Northamptonshire compared with the South East region generally, the central position of the county, and the comparative lack of restrictive development policies (relating to landscape protection policies such as Green Belts).

The Economic Development Unit within the Planning and Transportation Department of Northamptonshire County Council assessed the impact and potential opportunities of the A14 trunk road on Northamptonshire's economy in 1997. The council's intention has been to establish whether the envisaged increase in development activity has materialised since the A14's opening and what the potential for growth along this transport corridor is likely to be into the next decade. The council has identified two zones – one three miles and the other seven miles from the road – to illustrate not only the impact of the A14 on areas immediately adjacent to the road but also the wider impact on the surrounding area. Three indicators were used for this assessment:

- Industrial and commercial land take.
- Vacant property rates.
- The relocation and expansion of companies.

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Results show that from mid-1993 to mid-1996 there were 85 ha of industrial development at sites within seven miles of the A14. The amount of land uptake in the twelve months to mid-1996, compared with the twelve months to mid-1994, had increased by 470 per cent. Over the same time period the proportion of development within the three-mile zone increased as a percentage of the land take for the whole county from 9 per cent to 22 per cent. Vacant property rates increased slightly between 1994 and 1996, but the figures have been distorted by a large increase in vacant property in Corby, owing to one very large property coming on to the market. In Daventry and east Northamptonshire vacant property rates within seven miles of the A14 fell significantly (by 59 per cent). The council's assessment discovered that a large number of major companies had relocated or expanded immediately adjacent to the A14 since its completion and that the A1–M1 link has been a major factor in relocation decisions, particularly of companies for whom distribution is vital. The council has predicted that there will be increased development activity in the vicinity of the road particularly within the next five years, and has concluded that it is imperative that further improvements are made in the upgrading of the transport corridor. Northamptonshire County Council sees a particular requirement for the road to become a combined road–rail link although this is dependent on receiving additional funding. Northamptonshire County Council is not a recipient of loans from the European Investment Bank or Fund and the authority is therefore looking for more creative ways of getting money through, for example, private/public sector partnerships. Northamptonshire County Council is also interested in developing TETN links further.

Influence of Euro-route 28 on the Structure Plan

The Northamptonshire County Structure Plan for the period 1983–2001 was approved in February 1989. It was indicated at the time that the county planning authority would wish to undertake an early review of the residential, industrial and commercial policies contained within the plan to take account of changed circumstances with regard to the anticipated levels of population, increased pressure for development and opportunities to accommodate additional development in locations well related to improved infrastructure, in particular the M1–A1 link road. The review, Alteration No. 1 to the Northamptonshire County Structure Plan, was approved by the Secretary of State in January 1992 and became operative the following month. None of the policies within the transport section of the plan makes any reference to Trans-European Transport Networks but reference is made instead to the M1–A1 link, and to 'strategic' roads – those which serve the strategic purpose of linking major towns in the county and also in adjoining areas. Development pressure along the A14 has already increased, and Northamptonshire County Council relies on the Structure Plan policies to provide a means of control.

The County Structure Plan has already increased the allocation of industrial and commercial land for future development. An additional 410 ha of industrial land was provided for the county to 2006 in the 1992 Alteration No. 1 Plan, 261 ha of which were allocated to those districts within a seven-mile zone of the Trans-European Transport Network. The document also introduces a new policy, setting out the criteria against which major business or industrial developments in the vicinity of existing and proposed motorway and principal trunk road junctions can be examined. It was accepted by the plan's Examination in Public panel that further proposals were indeed likely to come forward during the Structure Plan period. As a consequence of development pressures created by the Trans-European Transport Network, Policy EMP 4 of the plan states that:

Major business, general industrial, storage or distribution development adjacent to existing or new motorway junctions and major trunk road junctions, will not normally be permitted unless it can be shown that:

- A. It will not have an adverse impact on the trunk road and motorway network.
- B. It is of a type, scale and design which will not have an adverse effect on the amenities of the locality.
- C. It has a satisfactory means of access and sufficient parking facilities.
- D. It can be provided with the necessary infrastructure and public services.
- E. It will not adversely affect any conservation areas or buildings listed as being of architectural or historic interest and their settings.
- F. It will not adversely affect sites of nature conservation, geological or archaeological importance.
- G. It has full regard to the requirements of agriculture and the need to protect the best and most versatile agricultural land from irreversible development.
- H. The site has been identified for such use in a statutory local plan.

Information sources

The European Officers' Group monitors all Europe-related information that comes to the authority from Brussels (either directly or through the East Midlands Counties European office in Brussels) or from central government. The group then operates an information dissemination service throughout the authority. Other sources of information include the *Official Journal*, the European Information Service bulletin and the *Week in Europe* newsheets. The Planning and Transportation Department has also compiled a comprehensive reference document of external funding opportunities for the department. A further information service is the Northamptonshire Business and European Information Centre (NBEIC). This is staffed mainly by library staff from the County Council, and provides information for the local business community as well as general information for the public. The NBEIC has been held up as an exemplar of its kind, and its logo was used for the UK Public Information Relay Network. The NBEIC is also an associate member of Leicester European Information Centre, with an officer of the Planning

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and Transportation Department representing Northamptonshire County Council at the Leicester European Information Centre Steering Group meetings. The Planning and Transportation Department has access to the Committee of the Regions via its participation in the work of the East Midlands Regional Planning Forum; officers have a direct input into the preparation of briefing papers on emerging European initiatives, policies and programmes.

The opportunity is made available to local authority staff for training on European issues. Improving training for County Council employees is one of the objectives of the council. In September 1996, for example, the council's corporate headquarters personnel, in conjunction with the Planning and Transportation Department, hosted a conference on 'Europe and Transnational Cooperation' which was attended by elected members and officers. Northamptonshire County Council is aware of European policies and initiatives, and the Economic Development Unit within the Planning and Transportation Department is active on European matters. The council considers that an important issue is that of regional positioning, and the need for counties or regions to be placed in groups with distinct commonalities. This is an issue officers from the authority intend working on in the near future.

8 Urban and rural area of Scotland: Strathclyde

Until 1996 Strathclyde was a local government region located in south-western Scotland and was home to approximately 2.2 million people – almost half the population of Scotland. The main urban centre of the region was and remains the city of Glasgow, with a population of some 700,000. In recent years Strathclyde has experienced a severe decline in its main industries – coal, steel, shipbuilding and other heavy engineering: between 1975 and 1994 the region suffered a fall of 59.6 per cent in its manufacturing employment. At the time this research was undertaken, regional unemployment rates stood at 9.5 per cent (compared with the UK average of 8.2 per cent), a figure that masked local concentrations of unemployment of over 20 per cent in, for example, Glasgow city centre. The level of industrial decline in the region has ensured its eligibility for EU assistance through the Structural Funds. Strathclyde has fallen within the Western Scotland Objective 2 assisted area, aimed at converting regions which have been seriously affected by industrial decline. The northern part of the region, now administered by Argyll and Bute Council, qualifies for funding under the Highlands and Islands Objective I programme (which was allocated £242 million for 1994–9), for the economic adjustment of regions whose development is lagging behind. The Strathclyde region has also received funding from several of the Community initiatives, designed to target specific problem areas, and these include RECHAR I and II, RENAVAL, URBAN and RESIDER II. Total EU funding in Strathclyde between 1988 and 1997, by way of illustration, was approximately £614 million, with a further ECU304 million allocated under the 1997–9 Objective 2 area programme.

Strathclyde Regional Council (SRC), in place until local government reorganisation in April 1996, was responsible for spearheading new initiatives and developments in the area in a European context. In 1991 the council received the inaugural award for regional planning from the European Community and the European Council of Town Planners for its work. As a consequence of reorganisation, Strathclyde Regional Council was abolished

and a number of unitary authorities were established, each of which has the (daunting) task of continuing the work of the Regional Council. Other important organisations possessing an EU remit within the region include the Strathclyde European Partnership (SEP), set up to manage the Structural Funds programme in Strathclyde, the Highlands and Islands Partnership programme responsible for the administration of Objective I funding, and the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan Committee, established in 1996 to undertake the strategic planning function jointly for several of the local authorities.

Strathclyde European Partnership

Strathclyde European Partnership was established in 1989. At its heart lies the Programme Executive, a public sector company limited by guarantee, and a feature unique to the Strathclyde area until 1994. The Programme Executive is the link between the local partners, the European Commission and the Scottish Executive, and provides a comprehensive management and administration service to ensure the efficient implementation of the Structural Funds in Strathclyde. The main objectives of the Programme Executive have been to:

- Ensure the efficient administration and management of the Objective 2 programme and other regional Community initiatives supported by the Structural Funds.
- Provide an efficient and effective service to the partnership committees.
- Safeguard the accountability of the Commission and implementing authority for the deployment of the Structural Funds by ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and guidance and by seeking value for money.
- Provide a responsive, flexible, quality, expert and helpful management service to the partnership.
- Maintain Strathclyde's position as a leading Objective 2 area in the management and use of the Structural Funds.

The Strathclyde European Partnership comprises 180 partners, and these are organisations that have accessed the Structural Funds in Strathclyde under the previous programmes. The partners are categorised into sectoral/interest groups, which form the basis of the representative system for membership of SEP committees: the Single Programming Document Monitoring Committee, the Programme Management Committee, and six advisory groups whose remit is to undertake detailed appraisal of projects in particular subject areas. The SPD Monitoring Committee is responsible for overseeing and monitoring the implementation of the Single Programming Document, and for monitoring

the Community initiatives implemented in the region covered by the Single Programming Document. The duties of the committee are agreed with the European Commission, and are set out in the Single Programming Document. The committee is chaired by the Scottish Executive, and has up to twenty members drawn from the appropriate European Commission, the Scottish Executive Industry Department and representatives of the various sectoral/interest groups of partners.

The Programme Management Committee (PMC) comprises up to thirty members, and has the following terms of reference:

- To consider and take decisions on ERDF and ESF project applications following recommendations based on detailed appraisals carried out by the advisory groups.
- To ensure projects are compatible with the objectives of the programme and comply with the relevant EC directives and regulations.
- To monitor financial progress of the programme and consider recommendations to the SPD Monitoring Committee on the allocation of funds between priorities for action where appropriate.
- To monitor project outcomes against targets.
- To promote the integration and coordination of projects and programmes where appropriate.
- Report its activities to and carry out any other duties delegated by the SPD Monitoring Committee.

Advisory groups have been established to consider ERDF and ESF project applications in each of the priorities for action, and to make recommendations to the Programme Management Committee. There are advisory groups for business development, business infrastructure, tourism, research and development, economic and social cohesion, and labour markets. The labour market group has a programme-wide responsibility for the implementation of ESF measures and ensuring labour market issues are taken into account by all priorities for action. The main functions of the advisory groups are to:

- Develop through appraisal and scoring mechanisms for ERDF and ESF project applications based on the selection criteria agreed by the SPD Monitoring Committee.
- Apply the agreed selection criteria and rank projects.
- Submit a list of project applications with recommendations on funding and appropriate comments to the Programme Management Committee.
- Report to the Management Committee on its activities.
- Carry out any tasks or duties as may be assigned by the SPD Monitoring Committee or Programme Management Committee from time to time.

Local authority representatives are usually from the corporate level such as the European Office or the economic development team. Representatives are then responsible for ensuring that all departments within the authority are informed of progress.

The implementing authority is the Scottish Executive (formerly the Scottish Office Development Department, SODD), responsible for ensuring compliance with the appropriate EC regulations on the Structural Funds and for their administration. Executive staff chair both the SPD Monitoring Committee and the Programme Management Committee. Not all partners are active within the committee system; at least one-third of the agencies that have accessed the Structural Funds do not wish to get involved with the decision-making and policy aspects of the partnership. However, between 100 and 110 partners are active within the committee system and many of these are organisations like local enterprise companies, local authorities and higher education institutions, which have a particular interest in European funds and the policy issues. Representatives on the committees from local authorities are varied, but normally are from the corporate level of the authority or part of the economic development team.

The Strathclyde European Partnership produces a range of information for its partners and at its most comprehensive is advice on completing European finance application forms. At the other end of the range is a leaflet outlining the role of the organisation and major issues. These documents are being updated in light of the post-1999 new Structural Funds programme period. The Partnership wishes to encourage a wider readership for its information, and produces a quarterly newsletter for dissemination to a wider audience. Information sources utilised by the Strathclyde European Partnership to keep abreast of European issues include accessing material from the Scottish Executive, the European Commission, Scotland Europa and the European Information Service. The form and extent of the available information is critical; it can often be difficult to identify what is relevant from the plethora of documents and similar information produced by Europe. The need for information that can easily be identified as being of relevance is a point echoed in the research by representatives of Glasgow and Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan Committee who considered that it is very easy to be overloaded by the quantity of information, some of it largely irrelevant, that emerges from the Commission.

Glasgow and Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan Committee

Following local government reorganisation in Scotland in 1996, the new local authorities in the Strathclyde area, with the exception of Argyll and Bute, are required jointly to take over responsibility for structure planning. The Glasgow and Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan Committee is the vehicle

through which structure planning will take place in future. The Joint Structure Plan Committee is responsible for:

- The preparation, monitoring and review of the Structure Plan on behalf of the member councils.
- Advice and recommendations on the policy content of the Structure Plan.
- The receipt of reports on the conformity of Local Plans with the Structure Plan and on development control matters of strategic importance.
- Liaison with and representation to central government, local enterprise companies and other bodies as necessary on matters of relevance to structure planning in the area.
- Such other action as may be necessary from time to time to sustain the policies contained in the Structure Plan and contribute to the economic, social and environmental regeneration of Glasgow and the Clyde valley.

The committee has had no formal input to the Objective 2 Single Programming Document but thinks that the relationship between the committee and the Strathclyde European Partnership may become more explicit in the future. The committee utilises information on European matters from the Scottish Executive, various European networks (such as Esturiales and Metrex), and the Strathclyde European Partnership.

European programmes

The Strathclyde region was eligible for a number of European programmes, and some of these are highlighted below.

City of Glasgow Council and the Esturiales Life Project

Esturiales is a pan-European partnership of authorities responsible for the sustainable management of five of Europe's major estuaries. The five are: the Clyde in Scotland, the Loire in France, the Severn on the English–Welsh border, the Tagus in Portugal and the Wear in England. The charter of the Esturiales partnership outlines the following objectives:

- To assist upgrading of the environment of estuaries in a consistent and sustained manner throughout Europe.
- To facilitate estuarine port economy and particularly the restructuring of existing historic ports.
- To facilitate developments which are directly related to their estuarine location.
- To assist the implementation and development of EC objectives as specified

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in the environmental programme, Coastal Zone Management proposals or similar ordinances.

The current Esturiales project is called 'Cybestuaries', and will result in a CD-ROM programme and supporting training material devoted to the widest dissemination of up-to-date professional knowledge of the five contrasting European estuaries. The focus will be on the nature of the issues and innovative management solutions, and good practice guidelines for sustainable estuary management will be included within the CD-ROM format. The project hopes to demonstrate how CD-ROM and multi-media interactive techniques may be incorporated into plan-making processes and studies. The total cost of the project is estimated to be ECU367,672; the maximum assistance from the European Commission was ECU176,720, and was matched by approximately ECU190,953 from the members of the Esturiales partnership.

RENAVAL

The RENAVAL programme received £16.5 million in grants from the European Regional Development Fund to assist with the economic conversion of shipbuilding areas. The 'environment and tourism' action programme received approximately 44 per cent of the total programme funding. Activities that received funding under this action programme included stabilisation of the shoreline and river banks in the Clydeside area, tree planting, improvements to fencing and general waterfront revitalisation.

RECHAR I and II

This programme assisted areas severely affected by the decline of the coal industry. Eligible areas within Strathclyde incorporate the Ayrshire coalfield and adjacent yards. Under the Community initiative, priorities include improving the environment, promoting new economic activities and developing human resources (for example, through vocational training). The RECHAR II programme in western Scotland has been administered by Strathclyde European Partnership. The first RECHAR programme covered the period between 1990 and 1993, and was awarded a budget of £2.47 million from the European Regional Development Fund and £0.5 million from the European Social Fund. The overall objective of the programme was to assist in the economic conversion of the Cumnock and Sanquhar coal-mining community and help develop the conditions for sustainable development through the creation of new job opportunities. Projects were implemented within the framework of six sub-programmes:

- *Environment* – improving the environmental quality of areas seriously damaged by coal-mining activity.

- *Social and economic infrastructure* – aimed to renovate and modernise the social and economic infrastructure in coal-mining villages.
- *Provision of premises* – aimed to reconvert and modernise disused coal-mining buildings and their surroundings for businesses, including small and medium-sized enterprises, and to construct new industrial premises.
- *Business development* – aimed to encourage the growth and formation of businesses.
- *Tourism* – aimed to increase the number of visitors to the area and income generated.
- *Vocational training* – provided support to create training centres and courses.

The funding for each sub-programme comprised: environment £1.3 million; social and economic infrastructure £0.2 million; provision of premises £0.4 million; business development £0.1 million; tourism £0.3 million; vocational training £0.6 million. One of the largest projects to be funded under the first RECHAR programme was the Waterside Project in the Cumnock and Doon Valley District. The Waterside Industrial Estate heritage project received £59,800 from the European Regional Development Fund, and was designed to improve the image of the area, leave a legacy for future generations, add an important tourist attraction and act as a stimulus to further economic regeneration in the area. The proposal was expected to attract more than 100,000 visitors per annum and employ up to forty staff.

RESIDER II

RESIDER aims to assist areas which have been severely affected by the decline of the steel industry. Under RESIDER II, the objectives were to encourage the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, and the reconversion of declining industrial areas and infrastructure. Lanarkshire is the only Scottish RESIDER II area. The closure of major steel plants in Lanarkshire (especially the closure of the Ravenscraig works in June 1992) has caused a sharp decline in employment in the steel industry – from 19,331 in 1974 to just 1,092 in 1994. The RESIDER programme uses the Lanarkshire Regeneration Strategy, developed in partnership with Lanarkshire Development Agency, the five Lanarkshire local authorities, Strathclyde Regional Council, the East Kilbride Development Corporation, Scottish Enterprise and the Scottish Office, as its framework. The goal of the Regeneration Strategy, now adopted by the RESIDER programme, was to restructure the economy and improve the business, labour market, physical and community infrastructure of Lanarkshire so as to achieve regeneration which is technology-led, economically sustainable and environmentally aware. The programme comprises steel site regeneration and the development

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of sustainable communities, and aims to be complementary to the Western Scotland Objective 2 programme. RESIDER has also been administered by the Strathclyde European Partnership.

URBAN

The URBAN programme provides support for programmes which address the economic, social and environmental problems of deprived urban areas. North Glasgow and Paisley are the two Scottish areas that have received funding under this initiative. The Urban Community Initiative in Paisley covered the period 1996–9, and was implemented by the Paisley Partnership. The partnership comprises Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Homes, the Argyll and Clyde Health Board, Paisley Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Community and Voluntary Organisations Council. The URBAN Community initiative in Paisley has approved European funding of ECU5.612 million. Of this, ECU1.385 million has been awarded by the European Social Fund and ECU4.227 million by the Regional Development Fund. The overall objective of the Community initiative has been to build up the capacity of individuals and communities to benefit from local economic development. The individual measures under which this is to be achieved are:

- Improving prospects of employment for local people.
- Support in improving the local capacity to solve problems.
- Launching new economic activities – this measure includes industrial and environmental improvements to buildings, sites and premises.
- Improvement of social provision.

The impacts of the Community initiative projects are expected to be as follows:

- A reduction of the excess unemployment levels in the target area relative to district-wide levels by well over half the current amount, especially among young people.
- In the absence of major national recession, a sustained reduction of at least 1,000 in the number of unemployed people in the target area, as compared with the 1991 census figure.
- Greater participation in the labour market by women and other groups with particular access problems.
- Enhanced skill levels and earning capacity among target area residents.
- Surrounding business areas which are more environmentally suited to their potential role as part of a significant economic growth area.
- More stable communities.

- Community groups and individual volunteers in the target areas who are more actively involved in local events and activities, and active community involvement in planning for further continuation of the Partnership's work.

Parallel administrative and committee systems must be established for the Community initiatives; because the level of funding is relatively small for each (in comparison to the funding for the Objective 2 programme) the Community initiatives end up being more costly in terms of the amount of administration required. Further, throughout the United Kingdom, Community initiatives are subject to an *ad hoc* set of management arrangements, which can be confusing for external organisations which may want to make applications or participate. The Strathclyde European Partnership feels that, whilst the Community initiatives are advantageous in that they target specific areas, this could be achieved under the main programme and would save the additional administrative costs. Similarly it would be advantageous if there was a one-door approach to the Structural Funds; for example, if all the Scottish Community initiatives were dealt with and administered by one body, such as the Strathclyde European Partnership.

Other EU programmes within the Strathclyde area

Ouverture and ECOS. These are Article 10 funded networks designed to assist the local, regional and city authorities in the European Union establish and develop cooperation with their counterparts in Central and Eastern Europe. Prior to reorganisation, Strathclyde Regional Council and Glasgow City Council were involved in nine projects that received more than £600,000.

Metrex. Ouverture was the vehicle through which Strathclyde Regional Council developed Metrex. Metrex is an embryonic network of metropolitan areas. It is based on the assumption that 80 per cent of Europe's population live in metropolitan areas and as yet there is no clear network that represents such areas. Most issues and policy developments in Europe have to be relevant to metropolitan areas if they are going to be effective, for example in achieving transport and environmental policies, social cohesion issues, etc. The programme was initiated by Strathclyde Regional Council in 1996, and founding members included Lisbon, Copenhagen, Krakow, Helsinki, Athens and Nice. All city-regions in Europe with a population of more than one million have been invited to be part of this network, and there are now approximately a dozen members. Potentially, Metrex will be a much bigger organisation, particularly in view of the contents of the European Spatial Development Perspective and its recommendation that there should be some kind of network in place to support it. Metrex has been led by Glasgow City Council in terms of core funding for the first three years, and after this time it has been supported by subscriptions from the member metropolitan areas.

Structural Funds

Strathclyde Integrated Development Operation

The Strathclyde Integrated Development Operation (IDO) covered the period from 1 January 1988 to 31 December 1992, and was the first five-year programme of EU funding in the region. The Integrated Development Operation was the largest in the United Kingdom and obtained some £650 million of funding over the five-year period. The overall aim of the operation was building a sound base for long-term self-sustaining growth, and to achieve this an integrated approach was essential. The programme was managed by the Strathclyde Integrated Development Operation Coordinating Committee, under which two working groups were established to oversee the implementation, coordination and monitoring of the ERDF and ESF-supported sub-programmes. Both the Coordinating Committee and the working groups were supported by the Programme Executive, whose role was to direct and coordinate the programme activities. In its initial phase the programme concentrated mainly on strategic infrastructure, with approximately 60 per cent of the IDO funding going to projects relating to transport, industrial sites, water and sewerage, and environmental improvements to industrial premises. These projects played a major role in creating the physical conditions which allowed the region to develop opportunities. The transport and communications action programme constituted 37 per cent of the original ERDF allocation, and was designed to improve the region's external communication links with the rest of the United Kingdom and Europe and to improve selective internal communications. The Regional Councils accounted for 64 per cent (£58 million) of the total expenditure (£92 million). The Integrated Development Operation made a significant contribution to improving the strategic infrastructure of the region. Improvements to Glasgow airport, for example, have resulted in an expansion of its connections with Europe and the rest of the world. Improvements to the strategic road network (for example, the M80 Stepps bypass and the St James interchange on the M8 in Paisley) have served to remove transport constraints affecting large parts of the region.

By the end of the programme period the emphasis had changed to developing 'soft' infrastructure, such as business development, applied research and a wide range of tourism projects. The final report on the programme, produced in July 1996, concluded that 'The IDO made a significant contribution to the realisation of many of its strategic objectives. In particular the improvements to strategic infrastructure have created the conditions for continued business and employment growth.'

Environmental projects funded under the Integrated Development Operation are many and varied. They include, for example, the Forth and Clyde Canal Project, aimed at revitalising the canal which runs through the

heart of the Glasgow conurbation. The programmes that have followed on from the Integrated Development Operation have continued its work.

Western Scotland Operational Programme (WSOP)

The Western Scotland Operation Programme was a one-year programme for 1993, enabling the European Union to bring all programmes up to the same finishing time at the end of 1993. The programme was not a straightforward extension of the Integrated Development Operation; there was a shift in emphasis towards support for business development. The programme received funding of £58.7 million from the European Regional Development Fund; resources were made available in the form of grants ranging from 25 per cent to 50 per cent of eligible project costs. Projects were considered under six headings:

- Development of productive activities.
- Transport and communications.
- Environmental improvements.
- Tourism development.
- Business development.
- Research and development and vocational training.

1994–6 Objective 2 programme period

The programme covered the period 1 January 1994 to 31 December 1996; the original budget was £174.2 million from the European Regional Development Fund and £49.3 million from the European Social Fund. At the time the research was undertaken, the majority of projects funded by the programme had not been completed. The main strategic aim of the programme was to ‘work together to strengthen Western Scotland’s capacity to create and sustain wealth, and to achieve convergence with other Community regions, without damaging the quality of the natural environment’. This strategic aim was then translated into two strategic objectives:

- To enhance the competitiveness of the western Scotland economy in order to improve economic growth, job prospects and the quality of life of the regional population.
- To improve economic and social cohesion within the region in order to increase economic development opportunities for individuals and communities faced with growing social and economic exclusion.

These strategic objectives were converted by the Strathclyde European Partnership into three operational objectives, intended to steer the actual development of projects under the Single Programming Document:

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- To enhance the competitiveness of the regional business sector by promoting indigenous potential and attracting inward investment.
- To improve the employment prospects and standard of living of its people.
- To improve economic and social cohesion within the region and the match of supply and demand in local labour markets.

An interim assessment and evaluation of the 1994–96 programme was undertaken by Hall Aitken Associates at the end of 1996 and published in 1997. It predicted that the programme was likely to create in excess of 20,000 jobs, and achieve a majority of its physical output targets. The interim assessment concluded that considerable progress had been made towards achieving the plan objectives.

1997–9 Objective 2 programme period

In February 1997 the Commission approved the budgets and budget breakdown (the measures) for this programme. The Commission's contribution to the programme was ECU304 million, plus ECU28 million which was transferred forward from the 1994–6 programme that had not been committed to budgets. Eighty per cent of this money was from the European Regional Development Fund (of which there was a sixty–forty split in terms of capital and revenue funding) and 20 per cent was from the European Social Fund. The 1997–9 programme did not change direction significantly from its predecessor. Rather, there were shifts in emphasis:

- A continuing shift towards business development.
- An increase in funding for applied research and technological development and innovation.
- Greater emphasis on urban regeneration, to ensure more resources are targeted in specific local areas.
- More emphasis on community development – concentrating resources in the most deprived communities.
- More emphasis on themes which are becoming increasingly important such as Equal Opportunities and environmental sustainability.

The Strathclyde Regional Council Structure Plan has been used as the framework for the 1994–6 and 1997–9 Single Programming Documents. Work implemented under these documents and through the Community initiatives has been consistent with this plan. One of the main debates that has surrounded the current Single Programming Document that has had a very strong planning context, and concerned strategic locations and sites for employment opportunities for the future. The European Union wanted the Single Programming Document to name a specific number of small sites in

which investment would be made over the programme period; this would be additional to policies and plans for employment opportunities contained in the structure plan. The Strathclyde European Partnership presented to the Commission the argument that the Structure Plan was the framework for the Single Programming Document, and that strategic sites not listed in the Structure Plan could not be developed as such – the plan itself should already contain the most appropriate and advantageous sites.

A senior official at Glasgow City Council, stated in an interview to the authors that:

the relationship between the SPD and the Structure Plan is becoming more and more difficult, because there seems to be a requirement for the SPD to become increasingly precise . . . this is interesting because as it becomes more precise, then it looks to planning to make it more precise.

A second area of concern relates to the movement of jobs out of the city. The council considered that such movement was encouraged by the Single Programming Document, as the document's structure reflects the boundaries of the Objective 2 area; thus grants are available throughout this area and are not confined to Glasgow city. The problem is considered to be compounded by extra money available at sites outside the city – for example, in the New Towns around Glasgow and in the Enterprise Zones. The council hoped that, over time, and with the progression of the Structure Plan, the situation would even itself out.

Objective 1 funding

Within the geographical area allocated Objective 1 funding, there has also been Structural Fund assistance prior to the current programme period. The Highlands and Islands have been supported by various programmes, including the Scottish Islands Agricultural Development Programme (ADP), the Rural Enterprise Programme (REP), and the 1992–3 Operational Programme. Both the Agricultural Development Programme and the Rural Enterprise Programme were funded through the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund. The Agricultural Development Programme aimed to increase the economic return to farming in the islands it covered, and interim conclusions suggest that the living standard of farmers in these islands has actually been raised. The Rural Enterprise Programme was designed to assist the development and diversification of the rural economy of the Highlands and Islands, and to offer integrated support for commercial development with non-commercial environmental benefits through the innovative use of environmental management plans. More than 700 projects have been proposed as a result of the Rural Enterprise Programme.

The Highlands and Islands region suffers from peripherality in relation to the rest of the European Union and also from internal peripherality between

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the various communities within the region. The Objective 1 Single Programming Document states that, together, this is seen as the principal reason for the region's economic problems. Unemployment and underemployment remain common features and income levels are generally low. The Objective 1 programme 1994–9 aimed to create a secure and diverse economy firmly established within the European context by minimising the economic and social disadvantages due to the region's peripheral location and by focusing on the region's strengths and opportunities. To meet this objective, the programme intended to increase and sustain GDP growth rates, and reduce unemployment and underemployment. Priority areas included business development, tourism, heritage and cultural development, the preservation and enhancement of the environment, the development of the primary sectors and related food industries, community development, and the improvement of communications and service networks to enhance business and community development.

Development control

The EU directives that have had the greatest impact upon planning in Strathclyde have been the Environmental Assessment Directive and the Habitats Directive. Glasgow City Council stated that the former directive had made environmental considerations an explicit part of the development control process, and might lead to an impact on decisions. The Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive is likely to have an increasing impact upon development control in the future. Sewage sludge arising from the Glasgow conurbation has been dumped in the Clyde estuary for many years. Water quality has been monitored by a group at Stirling University, and to date no harmful effects have been measured. However, the Waste Water Treatment Directive requires that the disposal of sewage sludge to sea should cease. Alternatives to sea disposal have been considered by the Water and Sewerage Authority (Strathclyde Regional Council, and subsequently Western Scotland Water and Sewerage) and include sludge incineration plants, treatment plants and the search for long-term uses for treated sludge. This has been a direct impact.

Development plans

Strathclyde Regional Council Structure Plan

The 1995 Structure Plan is the third update since the initial Structure Plan and provides the strategic policy framework for the Strathclyde region. The key themes of the Structure Plan are to:

- Strengthen the regional economy.
- Reduce deprivation and disadvantage.
- Protect and enhance the environment.

- Use non-renewable resources prudently.
- Minimise pollution.

The Structure Plan contains no chapter or section making explicit reference to the European context surrounding strategic planning in the region. The plan is, however, peppered with references to European directives, programmes and documents, and to examples of planning practice in other European countries. The following directives are mentioned in the plan: Fresh Water Fisheries Directive; Urban Waste Water Directive; Quality of Bathing Water Directive; Directive on the Quality of Water intended for Human Consumption; Habitats Directive; Birds Directive. The first four directives are referred to as legislative requirements that have been imposed in relation to infrastructure resources. The response to the Fresh Water Fisheries Directive, for example, required Strathclyde Regional Council to bring forward the proposed Kelvin valley sewer at a cost of £57 million, and the Urban Waste Water Directive has resulted in a £100 million strategy for sludge treatment.

The Habitats and Birds Directives are mentioned extensively in the ‘Natural resources: nature conservation’ chapter. The plan states that the hierarchy of site and habitat designations brought forward to meet European and national legislation implies a corresponding hierarchy of protective policies; Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas designated under the Habitats and Birds Directives are found at the top end of the hierarchy, and are protected by policy NAT 1 of the plan: ‘There shall be an absolute presumption against development in, or having an adverse effect, on Natura 2000 sites, designated or proposed under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives, and wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention.’

The plan states that Scottish Natural Heritage has indicated the areas that may fall to be designated as Special Protection Areas or Ramsar sites. The section regarding species protection states that legislative requirements for the protection of habitats and species cannot easily be implemented solely through the planning process; however, the mechanism exists through indicative policy frameworks to recognise the need to safeguard the breeding areas and territories of nationally important raptors and upland breeding waders.

Chapter eight of the Structure Plan relates to ‘Remoter Rural Areas’ (RRAs), areas that lie outwith reasonable travel-to-work distances from the main urban areas, but which have economic linkages with these areas and are a major focus of recreation and tourism. The plan states that European policy has an increasingly significant impact on the Remoter Rural Areas. The Highlands and Islands area, which includes Argyll and Bute and Arran, possessed Objective 1 status, in recognition of the area’s economic and social disadvantages. Significant parts of the Remoter Rural Areas in southern

Strathclyde have also been covered by the RECHAR programme for former coal-mining areas. It is acknowledged that the resources available under these programmes have offered considerable potential for enhancing the economic prospects of the Remoter Rural Areas. Other European references in the Structure Plan are largely confined to the transport chapter. The chapter includes a reference to the Euro-terminal at Mossend, north Lanarkshire, and the establishment of a major freight and industrial complex alongside it to encourage long-distance freight traffic to transfer to rail. A statement later in the plan mentions the higher demands for transport services, particularly for trans-European rail services through facilities such as the Channel Tunnel and the rail freight terminal at Mossend, that will result from higher levels of economic activity in the region advocated by plan policies.

It is interesting to note that no mention is made in the Structure Plan of the Objective 2 status of most of the Strathclyde area, nor directly of the other Community initiatives operating in the area. However, an indirect mention is made in the section of the plan covering urban renewal, which states that for areas with acute local problems (for example, in north Lanarkshire with the closure of the Ravenscraig steelworks) funds could be augmented from EU programmes.

Networks and partnerships

The European programmes appear to have stimulated a higher degree of local partnership than might have occurred normally. A representative of the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan Committee attributed this to the 'clear strategic planning framework which has established priorities for action and a framework for joint management of projects which has provided a mechanism for implementation'. This can be illustrated by Strathclyde Regional Council's approach to environmental programmes. The council's strategy for 'Greening the conurbation' provided a vision and framework for environmental action within which agencies can cooperate and local communities can participate. Nine key projects have been established, each with a specific area focus and partnership of public agencies, community groups, the voluntary sector and individuals. The European Community is a common partner in all these projects, and projects have been implemented as part of EC programmes, such as the Integrated Development Organisation and the Western Scotland Operational Programme.

Awareness of European policy issues and initiatives relevant to planning, such as *Europe 2000* and *2000+*, and the Fifth Environmental Action Programme, and the incentive to develop local initiatives relating to them, has been varied in Scotland. Strathclyde Regional Council was at the centre of developing new initiatives and the regional plan included very explicit policy, with references to Europe, for example, within the context of the Fifth Environmental Action Programme, and this plan has been the framework

for the Single Programming Document. In terms of environmental initiatives, the council was almost ahead of its time. The *European Programme for Environmental Action in Strathclyde*, produced by Strathclyde Regional Council, stated that 'European issues will have an increasing impact on the lives of the people of Strathclyde . . . EC legislation and directives have raised public awareness of environmental matters'.

Other organisations within Strathclyde have only an 'awareness' of European initiatives such as *Europe 2000*, *Europe 2000+* and the European Spatial Development Perspective. Strathclyde European Partnership regarded *Europe 2000+* and the European Spatial Development Perspective as background documents which provide context but do not influence the various EC programmes directly. Similarly, Glasgow City Council did not regard *Europe 2000* and *2000+* as documents that had influenced or advanced the council's planning policy to date. Both regarded this as positive. Nevertheless, the organisations have monitored spatial planning developments, and Glasgow has recently produced a city development strategy that touches on issues raised in *Europe 2000*, *Europe 2000+*, and the European Spatial Development Perspective.

9 Urban and rural area of Wales: Mid Glamorgan

This case study is based on Mid Glamorgan County Council, a local authority that existed prior to local government reorganisation in Wales in April 1996. Mid Glamorgan, comprising predominantly the South Wales valleys north of Cardiff and south of the Brecon Beacons National Park, covers an area of over 100,000 ha, and has a population of nearly 550,000. The area has suffered from persistently high levels of unemployment as a result of the severe decline in coal mining and other heavy industries. The numbers of those economically active in the area are well below numbers for the United Kingdom as a whole – economically active males as a proportion of the working age population are 78.2 per cent (compared with 86.8 per cent for the United Kingdom as a whole); economically active females are 59.9 per cent (compared with 67.6 per cent for the United Kingdom). As a consequence of these factors, Mid Glamorgan was part of the Industrial South Wales Objective 2 region, which received nearly £40 million from the European Regional Development Fund between 1986 and 1996. Objective 2 status was granted to the area from 1989. Mid Glamorgan has also been eligible for a number of Community initiatives, such as RECHAR and RETEX. This chapter considers the European dimension of planning in Mid Glamorgan by considering a number of interrelated factors, including the organisational structure, the development plan context, the networks that have developed, and the operational programmes.

Organisational structure

Mid Glamorgan County Council had a Policy and Research Unit, housed originally in the Chief Executive's Department, that reported to the Policy Committee. The unit was established mainly as a response to the availability of funding from a variety of sources, but in particular the Structural Fund programmes. Aside from European matters and the coordination of European bids, the unit had a range of other responsibilities, which included bidding

for other sources of external funding (for example, Lottery money), some responsibility for the Welsh Office strategic development scheme, policy research (for example, statistical analysis of census data) and undertaking specific research projects to support the development of policy in the various service areas of the authority. There was also a corporate responsibility for gathering and disseminating information on European issues to the departments within the authority. Each department had a contact point for this purpose, thus establishing clear channels of communication. Professional officers within the Planning Department considered that the Policy and Research Unit was key to their knowledge and awareness of European matters. The European function of the unit gradually expanded as the council embarked upon Structural Fund programmes.

The unit recognised that wider aspects of EU legislation (and in particular the Single European Act) were having an impact on local authority services. To examine this further, a corporate working group was established by the unit on European issues and legislation. Over an eighteen-month period the working group undertook an audit of all the service areas in the authority to assess the impact of EU legislation upon them. The audit discovered that EU legislation was having a marked impact on different service areas in different ways. The main area of impact related to new procurement legislation, but the audit also highlighted what information each service area or department was receiving separately from the Policy and Research Unit; the main finding here was that, informally, a number of the local authority departments were becoming more aware of European developments relevant to their areas of work themselves. The Planning Department, for example, received information through professional journals and updates. The audit enabled the unit to respond more effectively to each department, as it was more aware of their individual needs. From the audit's findings an action plan was produced for the authority. Recommended action included a series of seminars for elected members in the different service areas and at a corporate level, to increase their awareness of European legislation and issues.

Mid Glamorgan Structure Plan

The Mid Glamorgan Structure Plan was originally approved in 1982. Alterations made to the plan in 1985, which were subsequently approved in 1989, extended the plan's coverage up to 1996. The Mid Glamorgan Draft Replacement Structure Plan was placed on deposit in December 1993, and aimed to establish a land use strategy and policies up to 2006. The 'Structure Plan Strategy' chapter mentions Europe in its section 'The availability of resources'. The Objective 2 programme for industrial South Wales is briefly detailed, as is the RECHAR programme. The plan states that 'where bids for funding relate to land-use issues, they will help directly to implement the plan strategy'.

In terms of the impact of specific EC directives on the development plan, the Habitats and Birds Directives have had the most impact upon land use planning. The Mid Glamorgan area (part of which is now covered by Rhondda–Cynon–Taff County Borough Council) is one of the locations for the marsh fritillary butterfly, one of ten protected European species. Planning proposals have already been influenced by the presence of this butterfly's habitat. One example was the proposal to include the site to the north of Capel Llanilltern junction on the M4 motorway as a special employment site in Policy E5 of the Structure Plan. Evidence concerning the butterfly's habitat was presented at the Examination in Public held in November 1995. The panel's report gives a summary of representations made in response to the proposal, and the conclusions reached by the panel. Within the summary of representations, Friends of the Earth Cymru stated that the development would compromise habitats and the countryside in general. The panel concluded that the area is 'of some nature conservation interest' but recommended that these are 'detailed matters more appropriately considered in the context of a planning application and do not affect the suitability of the site in a strategic sense'. Although no mention is made in the report specifically concerning the habitat of the marsh fritillary butterfly, the overall recommendation by the panel was that the Capel Llanilltern site should not be included in Policy E5 as an identified special employment site; the main reasons for the decision were that the site 'is far from ideally located . . . and that the infrastructural requirements and broader environmental consequences of the development have not been fully evaluated'. This demonstrates the impact of EU directives on plan formulation although the objectives of the directive were not the principal issues that led the panel to make their decision.

Networks and partnerships

Mid Glamorgan County Council was involved in several formal networks related (either directly or indirectly) to European issues. They included:

- *Welsh European Officers' Group*. This group met to exchange information and take ideas forward on an all-Wales basis, where appropriate.
- *Network of European Officers from all the UK Objective 2 areas*. This was useful to the council, as it showed how the UK government was treating the different programme areas. It was a particularly helpful network at the project development stage.
- *Standing Conference on Regional Policy in South Wales*. This organisation comprised all the counties and some of the districts in the South Wales region. It was a useful vehicle for sub-regional issues such as the Structural Funds Industrial South Wales Objective 2 programme. The South Wales county authorities used this organisation to express their views and

opinions on the Objective 2 programme to both central government (through the Welsh Office) and to the European Commission.

- *Coalfield Communities Campaign.* The Coalfield Communities Campaign (CCC) was a United Kingdom-wide local authority organisation in which Mid Glamorgan participated and lobbied for coalfield area issues. The campaign provided the vehicle to lobby the European Commission for the RECHAR programme in South Wales. The Commission recognised that the campaign was able to represent all UK coalfield areas, and this was instrumental in establishing a network of European coalfield areas known as Euracom.
- *Ouverture programme.* The Mid Glamorgan County Council Planning Department was involved in a partnership project with Asturias in northern Spain through the Ouverture programme, concerning the transfer of European expertise into Eastern Europe. The Eastern European partner was a province of Bulgaria and the focus of the project was land reclamation and remediation. Representatives of the Planning Department visited Asturias to look at examples of Spanish land reclamation, and the visit was reciprocated by a visit to Mid Glamorgan. Both Spanish and Welsh partners then visited Bulgaria to present their findings and to exchange information and experience. Local government reorganisation within Wales in the period 1995–6 prevented the continuation of the programme.

Structural Funds

The county of Mid Glamorgan was covered by the Industrial South Wales Objective 2 area. Industrial South Wales covers only 17.5 per cent of the land area of Wales but contains almost two-thirds of the population. The area has a GDP well below both the UK and the EU average – some 13 per cent below the UK average and 15 per cent or more below the EU average. The area has also been afflicted by high unemployment rates. The lack of effective communications within the region has presented a crucial barrier to growth and, as such, ‘hard’ infrastructure has been one of the key priorities for Objective 2 funding over the duration of the programme. Funding has been sought for a number of highway improvements, notably the last ‘missing link’ of the M4 motorway in West Glamorgan and the second Severn crossing. The following discussion presents illustrations of the programmes that have been under way in Mid Glamorgan.

1986–9

The National Programme of Community Interest (NPCI) in Mid Glamorgan was the forerunner of the Objective 2 programme, and implemented a number

of pilots run throughout the United Kingdom. Mid Glamorgan County Council successfully lobbied the Welsh Office and the European Commission for the NPCI, and some £50 million was allocated to the area from the European Regional Development Fund. The Planning Department was heavily involved in the drafting of the programme, as the council's European officer's post was located within the department at the time. The Assistant County Planning Officer took the lead in coordinating the programme and representatives of the authority, now working for Rhondda–Cynon–Taff County Borough Council, considered that the NPCI programme was linked in much more closely with the Structure Plan than any of the programmes that followed it. Mid Glamorgan itself acted as a joint secretariat to the programme with the Welsh Office. This working partnership was abolished in the later Objective 2 programmes, and one officer from Mid Glamorgan was of the opinion that implementation of the programmes went backwards as a result. Under the NPCI, there was a heavy emphasis upon infrastructural projects, and a number of highway improvements were completed, including the Mid Rhondda Access Road (receiving nearly £5.5 million in ERDF grant) and the Talbot Green bypass (a recipient of over £4 million in an ERDF grant).

Integrated development operation and the Operational Programme

Together, these programmes received some £115 million in grants from the European Regional Development Fund, and £37 million from the European Social Fund. The overall strategic aims of the programmes were:

- To improve the employment prospects and standard of living of the region's work force.
- To support the economy's diversification by encouraging new entrepreneurs, developing the indigenous industrial and service sectors and attracting inward investment.
- To increase the level of technological innovation and use of technology in the region's firms, especially small and medium-sized enterprises.
- To provide infrastructure, sites and premises compatible with the requirements of modern industry and commerce.
- To increase the skills of the region's work force to meet appropriate demands.

To reflect these objectives, six sub-programmes were concentrated on: industrial infrastructure; communications; business development; the environment; tourism; and research and development.

Industrial South Wales Objective 2 programme

The overall strategic objective of the 1994–6 programme was to maximise robust economic growth through the creation of a diversified industrial base, particularly within the SME sector, leading to a self-sustaining economy which takes full account of environmental considerations. Within this objective, the four priorities for action are:

- Priority 1. Action for the Valleys and other disadvantaged urban communities.
- Priority 2. Action for industry and business.
- Priority 3. Action to support development of knowledge-based industries.
- Priority 4. Action for tourism.

Under the 1994–6 programme, and to a greater extent under the subsequent programme, Mid Glamorgan witnessed a shift in the types of projects being promoted and gaining acceptance by the European Commission. As elsewhere in the United Kingdom, there has been a change of emphasis towards softer infrastructure with, for example, emphasis on tourism promotion and the creation of ‘innovation centres’. This was an issue of concern to some council offices, as physical infrastructure is still very much needed in the Mid Glamorgan area. One Mid Glamorgan officer said that it is ‘not necessarily for the [European] Commission to decide what the region’s priorities are. The EC’s role should be to facilitate priorities that the people within the region feel are important.’ Planning officers from Mid Glamorgan County Council considered that there was some consistency between the Industrial South Wales Single Programming Document and the Mid Glamorgan Structure Plan, and that the two documents ‘fed off each other’ rather than following different directions, but in the opinion of the authority’s European officer, if the two documents did follow the same direction and have similar objectives it was purely coincidental. He thought there was a gap in regional strategic planning in the council, and indicated that this was something to be looked at in the future by way of the South East Wales Strategic Planning Forum (established following local government reorganisation in 1996). This organisation was established because of the lack of any other sub-regional organisation in South Wales and because of the fragmentation of local authorities after reorganisation.

Other European initiatives

Aside from the Industrial South Wales Objective 2 programme, Mid Glamorgan County Council was eligible, and received funding under, several Community initiatives. The most important of these was the RECHAR programme.

RECHAR I and II

The RECHAR initiative aims to accelerate the economic conversion of coal-mining areas. In South Wales approximately 27,000 jobs in the coal-mining industry were lost between 1979 and 1990. The regeneration of the area has been hindered by outdated infrastructure and a shortage of high-quality industrial sites in locations attractive to businesses. The first RECHAR programme in the South Wales area (1990–3) made £21.5 million available to the coalfield area. The programme aimed to create and safeguard employment opportunities in the South Wales coalfield and generally enhance the quality of life in the area. This was to be achieved by means of six sub-programmes:

- Business development and advice.
- Environmental improvement.
- Provision of industrial premises.
- Tourism.
- Vocational training.
- Social and economic infrastructure.

Projects with land use planning implications, for example the development of industrial premises and the reclamation of derelict land, have been developed in line with Structure Plan policies, which are in themselves fairly broad. In terms of land reclamation, it was the policy of central government in Wales to proceed at the maximum possible speed consistent with the production of high-quality landscapes and facilities acceptable to the local communities and attractive to inward investment. The Structure Plan policies provide a reasonably broad framework within which land reclamation projects could be implemented under the RECHAR programme and under the Objective 2 programme. Successes of the RECHAR I programme include the Cwm Cynon Business Park, which now has twenty-one small factory units, and a variety of land reclamation schemes.

The RECHAR II programme (1994–7) was initially allocated ECU16.4 million from the European Regional Development Fund and ECU4.1 million from the European Social Fund. The programme had three strategic objectives, to:

- Create jobs in mining communities.
- Improve the quality of life for those who live in mining communities.
- Strengthen the communities.

The strategy has been implemented by means of seven measures, namely: economic infrastructure in mining villages; alternative economic activities;

local tourism initiatives; vocational training; remedying damage caused by coal mining; community potential; and community infrastructure. The RECHAR II programme aimed to complement and yet be more distinctive from the Industrial South Wales Objective 2 programme than was RECHAR I. This was achieved by targeting more resources on specific areas and by directly addressing issues that the Single Programme Document could not. For example, RECHAR II aimed to directly address the environmental damage caused by coal mining, since the reclamation of land, landscaping and renovation of buildings for non-business use were not eligible under the 'urban regeneration' measure of the Single Programming Document; it was also noted that activities under RECHAR II do not have to be 'community-based', unlike activities under the Single Programming Document. Projects approved under the RECHAR II programme include the development of a community/cycle route network (£50,000 from the European Regional Development Fund), the renovation of a community hall (£16,842 from the European Regional Development Fund), and the Cynon Valley Heritage Centre (£105,000 from the European Regional Development Fund). Mid Glamorgan coordinated the draft of the RECHAR II Operational Programme. A former employee of Mid Glamorgan County Council attributed this to the fact that the Welsh Office was flooded by the need to draft so many other programmes at the time. The drafting group included local authorities and the Welsh Office, led by Mid Glamorgan. The county Planning Department was not involved at this level; instead, there was a separate group in Mid Glamorgan of officers who drafted parts of the programme where relevant to their areas of responsibility. Representatives of the six former district councils in South Wales were also present on the drafting group, and these officials generally came from a planning background, giving the local planning function an input into the RECHAR programme.

RETEX, LIFE and other programmes

Most of the Welsh involvement in RETEX has been in the Valleys and in West Wales. Mid Glamorgan County Council was involved in drafting the Welsh input into the programme. Mid Glamorgan received funding of approximately £20,000 for a species recovery programme at the Kenfig National Nature Reserve. Funding was also used under the LINGUA initiative to develop links between the seven further education colleges in Mid Glamorgan and partners in other member states. Transnational elements of the European Social Fund were also used to support links that were developed. Under the SOCRATES programme, funding was used to develop a much more pro-European strategy for linking the council's Education Department and primary and secondary schools with their counterparts in other member states.

Wales European Centre

The Wales European Centre (WEC) was set up on the joint initiative in 1991 of both the Welsh Development Agency (WDA) and the local authorities in Wales and was officially launched in February 1992. The role of the Wales European Centre, according to its marketing material, is to represent 'Welsh public and private sector interests and . . . to put Wales in the hearts and minds of key decision makers and opinion formers in Europe'. The Centre is essentially a partnership between the Welsh Development Agency and Welsh local authorities, but other partners include Training and Enterprise Companies, the Wales Tourist Board, National Parks, the Countryside Council for Wales, and the Welsh universities. The Welsh Development Agency was the principal funder (or sponsor), contributing approximately 30 per cent of the total cost, although other major sponsors of the Wales European Centre include the Welsh Local Government Association.

The official objectives of the Wales European Centre are as follows:

- To supply information, intelligence and contacts to sponsors.
- To provide a focal point for sponsors' involvement in European initiatives and programmes.
- To advise sponsors on policy developments.
- To maximise the flow of EU funding and programmes to sponsors.
- To inform the institutions of the European Union of sponsors' concerns in order to influence the broad directions of future policy developments.
- To promote networking among the Wales European Centre sponsors themselves.

The Welsh Development Agency has stated that the role of the Wales European Centre director should be to represent Welsh bodies to the European Commission, leading to the maximisation of the application and use of European programmes and funding in Wales and to a better understanding of Wales, Welsh needs and objectives by the Commission. The Wales European Centre is not a lobbying organisation but one which facilitates lobbying and representation. The presence of the Wales European Centre was really the turning point in the quest for eligibility for INTERREG funding for Wales. The Centre was a vital source of information for the relevant local authorities and provided examples of projects for the programme. The Centre also made a useful contact with the Association of European Border Regions/Linkage Assistance and Cooperation for the European Border Regions, which proved extremely helpful in the quest for INTERREG funding. The Wales European Centre supports the twenty-two unitary authorities (formerly thirty-seven district and eight county councils), all of which had different information requirements. It therefore took some

time for Mid Glamorgan to agree with the Wales European Centre the kind of service it wanted, as opposed to the services the districts would require. This was viewed as an inevitable problem with a Wales-wide structure.

Wales Regional Technology Plan

The Wales Regional Technology Plan aims to develop a consensus through extensive consultation on a strategy to improve the innovation and technology performance of the Welsh economy. The plan has been developed by a partnership of public, private and voluntary sector bodies, and is coordinated by the Welsh Development Agency. Both the European Commission and the Welsh Development Agency have provided funding for the project; the Commission has also supported the project with advice and by establishing a network of eight European regions, all of which are moving down the same path of investigation, analysis and priority setting. This has now been taken forward by the unitary authorities since 1997.

Note

In 1999 the industrial South Wales area, along with west Wales, became eligible for Objective 1 Structural Fund assistance in the period 2000–6. Work on this matter has been taken forward with the preparation of a National Development Strategy for Wales under the co-ordination of a task force. Central government in Wales now operates under the National Assembly for Wales, which works alongside the Welsh Development Agency and local authorities. The authorities have grouped under a number of strategic and regional planning fora, although these currently possess limited powers. At the time of writing (January 2001), proposals are in hand to formulate a National Spatial Planning Framework for Wales, with the intention of linking Structural Fund issues with land use planning policies and the policies of other agencies that possess an indirect spatial planning function.

10 Urban provincial city: Leicester

Leicester is a provincial city in the East Midlands region of England. Geographically the city is located in the centre of England and possesses a population of 295,000 (at 1995). Local government is operated by Leicester City Council, which, until the late 1990s, was a district authority. In 1997 Leicester City Council was granted unitary status. This chapter illustrates the European dimension of Leicester up to the period prior to local government reorganisation. Following an overview of the organisational functions of the City Council, the chapter considers the range of European initiatives the authority has been involved with, including funding programmes and networking. Leicester is included as a case study in this book as an example of a provincial urban area. It has not been eligible for any EU Structural Fund assistance, nor is it located on a Trans-European Transport Network route. Consequently the European aspect of Leicester City Council is not as significant as in some of the other cases studied in this book. Nevertheless, it does offer illustrations of the varying ways the European Union affects an urban local government authority in Britain and of the opportunities for local government to attract EU funding for a variety of initiatives.

Organisational structure and funding

Leicester City Council established a European office within its Environment and Development Division in 1994. The office consisted of a European officer (funded jointly with Leicestershire Training and Enterprise Council) whose time was divided between the City Council and the Training and Enterprise Council. A European strategy was drafted, in partnership with Leicestershire Training and Enterprise Council, to inform and guide the work of the European office, and this strategy takes a broad view of Europe; it is not concerned solely with finance issues but considers social, economic and environmental policy and practice issues. The European office has performed a number of functions:

- Bidding for European funding.
- Lobbying.
- Networking and liaison.
- Information provision.

The council's strategy on bidding for European finance is affected by the lack of Assisted Area status. Since the authority was nevertheless interested in 'utilising Europe', the European office has focused on accessing and participating in transnational issues and schemes. Between 1994 and 1997 the council secured over £3.8 million in European grants from a variety of sources. These included:

- A grant of £1.3 million in 1993 to support the Environment City Project funded under the LIFE I programme.
- A £50,000 project to develop Portuguese/English language modules to assist the language needs of small and medium-sized enterprises in Leicester and Lisbon, funded under the LINGUA programme.
- A project of £42,000 to provide young people with guidance on European issues. This was undertaken jointly between Leicester and its twin city, Strasbourg, and funded through the Youth Information Action Programme.
- A grant of £85,000 to develop open learning materials to develop the managerial and supervisory skills of women in small firms jointly with a local firm, a consultancy and a local college; this was funded under the FORCE II.
- A project of £85,000 to develop Italian/English language modules to assist small firms in Leicester and the Marcho region of Italy, funded through LINGUA II.
- A project promoted jointly by the City Council and Leicestershire Training and Enterprise Council to examine the likely impact of new technology and management techniques on the local distribution industry, and funded under COMMERCE 2000.
- A project of £45,000 to promote Leicester's 'green' achievements to other member states and to develop a sustainable transport strategy for each partner city. This involved partners from Cyprus, Israel and Morocco and was funded under the MEDS-URBS programme.
- Finance of £69,000 to encourage the use of more environmentally friendly transport, funded from the SAVE programme.

The European office regularly and actively lobbies officials from the European Commission, the European Parliament and individual members of the European Parliament. Much of this effort within the last few years has been directed towards the 1999 review of the Structural Funds. The European

office also actively seeks contracts and potential bid partners from Objective 1 countries, but not all the lobbying is directed at securing finance. The City Council was particularly active in commenting on the European Commission's Social Policy Green Paper and was successful in forcing ethnic minority issues on to the Commission's agenda.

The securing of over £1.3 million in 1993 under the LIFE I programme, to support the Environment City Project, provided the City Council with an opportunity to adopt a strategic approach to environmental issues. The Environment City Project brought together a network of key decision makers from across the community to serve eight specialist working groups. The task of the working groups was to look at Leicester at present and in the year 2020, based on a business as usual scenario. If the working groups were concerned about the vision, they were asked to explore alternatives to business-as-usual and how to reach a more desirable vision of the future. Many of the issues which they raised have been of direct relevance to planning (e.g. Leicester's preparation of an integrated transport strategy).

Networks and partnerships

The city of Leicester is formally twinned with Strasbourg and Krefeld, but has developed an extensive range of other European links and networks more specifically oriented to the workings of the European Union. Leicester has been an active member of the Barcelona Partenalia network and this has helped facilitate bids under the Commission's Leonardo, PACTE and MED-URBS programmes. The city is a member of the European Energy Cities network, which has enabled the exchange of information and allowed Leicester to contribute advice on the content of European energy programmes. The council has also participated in the Know-how Fund programme. The network and liaison role is assisted by the fact that the leader of Leicester City Council was an alternate member of the Committee of the Regions. This has provided the council with an opportunity to comment on draft legislation in policy areas such as health, energy and the Structural Funds.

The European office provides a corporate information source on European issues (funding opportunities, policy developments, good practice, etc.). It fulfils this function by: producing a regular newsletter, *European Update*, which is circulated within the City Council; the provision of briefing sessions and workshops on particular issues; establishing an Introduction to European Issues course which is provided as part of an induction course for all new elected members; and maintaining an advisory role on European issues to individual personnel within the authority. There has been a strong political interest in European issues which has helped ensure that such issues are progressed. The European office itself keeps abreast of EU policy developments through a number of means. They include regular contact between the City Council and the East Midlands Government Office European section

and liaison with the local MEP, in addition to receiving direct information from various EU Directorates-General. The office also receives all Commission documents that relate to social, economic, environmental and health issues. There also exists a Europe Working Party which looks at broad issues and bidding matters and is chaired by elected representatives. More formally, the European office reports to the council's Urban Regeneration Subcommittee.

Although the lack of Structural Fund assistance has been disappointing, the City Council has nevertheless embraced European issues and attracted a significant amount of funding through other EU programmes. This has been achieved through the work of the active European office but also by developing networks and partnerships with local authorities in other member states. The partnership between the City Council and the Training and Enterprise Council has also assisted working and organisational structures as contexts for European fund bidding. Finally, it should be noted that the City Council has been successful with bids for particular substantive fields, notably environment-related projects.

11 Rural maritime area: Gwynedd

Prior to local government reorganisation in Wales in April 1996, Gwynedd covered an area of over 3,700 km², and had a population of 235,452 (1991 figures). Located in the north-west area of Wales, Gwynedd comprises a maritime border of the North Wales coast and tourist resorts and the Llyn peninsula, and a sensitive landscape environment; within its area lies the Snowdonia National Park. The county is a very rural area and contains some of the most rural districts in England and Wales. As a consequence, the county suffers from low levels of socio-economic development, low levels of agricultural income, sparsity of population and high dependence on a few sectors of the economy for employment, such as agriculture, the slate and extraction industries, and energy production. This is offset to a degree by tourism promotion and income. In response to these factors, Gwynedd has received large Structural Fund allocations, in the form of the Rural Wales Objective 5b programme and funding from LEADER, INTERREG and PACTE Community initiatives. Following local government reorganisation, the county became a unitary shire and the geographical area over which the authority has responsibility was reduced in size. In 1996 the new County of Gwynedd area possessed a population of 118,000. This chapter considers the organisational structure of the County Council to address European issues, and goes on to consider transnational cooperation between Gwynedd and other member states. Attention is focused on three main areas: the influence of Europe on development plans; the influence of Europe on development control issues; and the attraction of Structural Fund assistance.

Organisational structure

Gwynedd County Council possesses a European Unit, based in the Chief Executive's Department. Staff members include two full-time European officers. The main responsibility of the European Unit is to increase awareness of European issues between the departments of the authority. This involves

information dissemination, facilitated via a series of information sheets and seminars. In addition to this, the European Unit has compiled a European magazine for Gwynedd, which is also available on the council's Internet pages. The magazine provides a digest of the main European issues in the area (for example, stating progress on projects funded through the Structural Funds) in addition to information on a variety of other European programmes such as LIFE II, RECITE II and Article 8, Support for Women in Agriculture. The other council department that deals with European matters to a significant extent is the Planning and Economic Development Department, responsible for plan preparation and development control, but also containing a business and marketing section that provides advice to local companies and facilitates the preparation of European bids.

Networks and partnerships

Gwynedd has been actively involved with a number of European schemes for transnational cooperation, including PACTE, Article 10 and INTERREG.

PACTE programme

Since local government reorganisation Gwynedd County Council has been involved in a European programme called PACTE, which encourages the exchange of experience between member states. The project submitted under the PACTE programme was entitled 'Rural Change', and aimed to focus upon the links between changes in population structure and policies for balanced and sustainable rural communities. Of particular interest was the subject of second home ownership, and the implications it has for the local housing stock and for local affordable housing provision. The project's objectives were:

- To gain better insight into and understanding of the interaction between housing markets and socio-economic development in rural areas.
- To develop a model framework for planning actors to address the problems and challenges of rural change and promote the objective of balanced and sustainable rural communities, in particular from the perspective of housing.
- To exchange experience and disseminate the findings in order to influence public policy towards, for example, tourism, village settlement (including second home ownership), rural service provision and rural employment initiatives.

Gwynedd's partners in the PACTE project were regions with similar rural characteristics and these regions comprised western Sweden, the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, Savo in Finland and Galicia in Spain. Case study

areas were selected within each region for more detailed study, and within Gwynedd these comprised Pwllheli, Aberdaron, Abersoch and Blaenau Ffestiniog. All four areas suffer from different types of problems in terms of their housing stock. For example, Blaenau Ffestiniog suffers from in-migration of Birmingham council estate residents, a situation which is altering the social fabric and thus the culture and characteristics of the area. Problems in another case study area relate to in-migration severely affecting house prices. Officials from the various regions, including Gwynedd, have visited the other regions in the partnership to assess rural change, second home problems, policy approaches and other issues. The result of these visits and information exchanges led to the production of a report which was submitted to the European Commission in 1997. The report raised awareness of broader rural problems being commonly experienced in different European regions and also addressed issues that may not have been issues that the UK government was prepared to consider (notably second home ownership and other rural housing problems). This heightened awareness, in turn, would prove useful for the authority's bid for Structural Fund assistance in 1999.

Article 10

Gwynedd County Council, along with other regions in Europe, submitted an application for Article 10 funding in 1997. The proposed project bid was to examine ways in which the local rural economy of a variety of regions with similar characteristics could be developed, for example by bringing small firms from different sectors of the economy into a consortium in order to increase their competitiveness. This would eventually lead to the development of a model for economic development in rural areas.

INTERREG

The INTERREG II programme focused on the strategic objective of developing links between Wales and Ireland, and seeks to build on the potential for cross-border cooperation that exists between the two countries. The most recent programme covered the period 1994–9; approximately £10 million was allocated to the Welsh side of the partnership, and £56 million to the Irish side. The difference in funding reflects the differences between the two countries in terms of the amount of physical infrastructure that is needed. Euro-route 28, the Ireland–Benelux Trans-European network, runs through the INTERREG area. Within North Wales studies are already under way looking at electrification of the main London–Holyhead railway line and the possibility of introducing rail freight ‘piggy-back’ schemes (rail vehicles that are able to carry heavy goods lorries) from Holyhead as part of the TETN scheme, with funding from INTERREG. INTERREG in this context was therefore seen as ‘facilitating planning’.

The INTERREG Development Officer is located at the European Carrefour Centre at Anglesey County Council and the day-to-day manager has been the Assistant Director of Economic Development. There were three other INTERREG officers – an INTERREG coordinator also based in Anglesey, an officer in Wicklow, Ireland, and an officer based in Carmarthen. The INTERREG Development Officer reported to the Joint Monitoring Committee, which comprised representatives from central government (formerly the Welsh Office), Gwynedd’s Department of Finance and Irish representatives. There were three joint working groups – maritime development, economic development and tourism, and human resources. Officers have attempted to ensure complementarity between INTERREG projects and planning and other policies (for example, the Wales 2000 Strategy, economic development strategies, various transport policies, and so on). This has been a difficult task at times but as planners they believe they are in a good position to try to ensure synergy between what is happening locally and what is occurring at the national strategic level. At present, however, there is no formal mechanism for doing so. The INTERREG programme has to date had no direct impact upon local plan policies themselves. Many of the INTERREG projects, for example the Celtic Circle project, deal more with interpretation than with land use planning, and would not in consequence be appropriate material for inclusion in a local plan, even if the financing has led to the existence of planning implications. One of the main problems encountered by planning officials with the INTERREG programme has been the time frame within which applications are decided. It has taken approximately eight to nine months before applicants know whether their project has been successful or not and this has made it difficult to plan ahead with any degree of certainty.

Gwynedd’s development plan

The slate industry in North Wales has declined significantly over recent years. It once employed 15,000 personnel but now employs a mere 600 people. The reasons for the decline have included recession and also competition from the Spanish slate industry. In an attempt to alleviate the decline, Gwynedd County Council (through the business and marketing section of the Planning Department) has been responsible for establishing a partnership between the local slate companies, with the aim of marketing Welsh slate as a single product and sharing the marketing costs between the companies. The partnership received almost £400,000 from a Welsh Office programme for the production of a marketing strategy. The project was initially entitled ‘The Marketing of Welsh Slate’, but this was altered to ‘Gwynedd Slate’ because of complaints, particularly from the Spanish slate companies, who considered the UK government to be using public money to promote a slate that would then have an advantage over Spanish slate.

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The Welsh Office money was used in 1996 as match funding for an ERDF bid to assist the marketing of Gwynedd slate. The ERDF bid was successful, and £500,000 was allocated to the partnership. An office was opened by the partnership in London, where a slate marketing officer has been responsible for increasing awareness of the use of Gwynedd slate. It is anticipated that the European grant will have a medium to long-term impact upon the local economy of Gwynedd, and may also contribute to the safeguarding of the remaining slate quarry employment.

The slate issue has also permeated into the development plan system. The modified Gwynedd Replacement Structure Plan, approved in November 1993, included references to the indigenous slate industry but this had implications for European competitiveness. The council considered the slate industry to be a valuable element of the Gwynedd economy and sought, in the submitted Policy D28, to encourage the industry by indicating that in most situations the use of natural Welsh mineral slate is essential to roof new buildings and extensions. Upon receiving the plan, the Secretary of State for Wales considered that, as written, this policy would place an unreasonable barrier on trade within the European Union. Whilst he accepted that the traditional use of Welsh slate has made a valuable contribution to the environment of Gwynedd, the Secretary of State thought that an amended policy would be more suitable and replaced Gwynedd's policy with a revised version that now states:

In the Snowdonia National Park and in other parts of the country where natural Welsh slate is the traditional roofing material, the roofing of new buildings and extensions, and re-roofing where it requires consent, will be in natural Welsh mineral slate or equivalent material with appropriate colour, texture and weathering characteristics.

This appears to be acceptable in the context of the problem of the Single European Act and competitiveness.

Structural Funds

The 1994–9 Rural Wales Objective 5b area covered some 1,427,112 ha, which was nearly three-quarters of the land mass of Wales, and the whole of the county of Gwynedd was included in the area. Rural Wales has a high percentage of workers in agricultural employment (approximately 10 per cent of the work force), and an even higher level of dependence on agriculture (approximately 25 per cent). At the same time, the area suffers from a low level of agricultural income, much of the farm land being of poor quality. The GDP of rural Wales is well below the UK average; in Gwynedd, for example, it is only 76.4 per cent of the UK average (based on 1991 figures). Economic activity rates in rural Wales are also low; for Gwynedd, the male economic activity rate is 82.3 per cent (compared with 86.6 per cent for the

United Kingdom as a whole), and the female economic activity rate is 62.3 per cent (compared with 67.6 per cent for the United Kingdom). In addition to these problems, rural Wales suffers from extensive out-migration of younger age groups, and in-migration of older age groups. This has created an ageing population structure, which may result in the depopulation of the area in the long term.

Prior to the Objective 5b programme there were two previous programme periods: the 1987–91 Dyfed Gwynedd Powys Integrated Development Operation (IDO) and the 1992–3 Dyfed Gwynedd Powys Operational Programme. These two programmes together received approximately £101 million worth of grants from the European Regional Development Fund, and nearly £8 million from the European Social Fund. Under the Integrated Development Operation the main priorities were:

- Economic development and diversification.
- Tourism.
- The development of human resources.
- Minimising the problems of peripherality.
- The development of multi-objective infrastructure.

Projects included the provision of workshops and business parks throughout rural Wales, and a variety of environmental improvement packages, including some for the towns of Holyhead and Aberaeron. An interim assessment of the Integrated Development Operation, whilst drawing positive conclusions about the programme's achievements, drew primarily upon qualitative material rather than a systematic assessment of target achievement. The 1992–3 Operational Programme resulted in the establishment of a number of new business centres throughout rural Wales, business advice and support services for small and medium-size enterprises, and the establishment of a number of new tourism attractions. The most recent programme (1994–9) received approximately ECU140 million from the Structural Funds. In addition to the European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund, grants were also available through the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund, and this was the first time the fund has been included in the Objective 5b programme. The Single Programming Document stated that the inclusion of the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund would ensure that the programme possessed a strong rural dimension that addressed the needs of the farming community. The three priority areas of the 1994–9 programme were:

- *Business development.* The strategy aimed to address the identified weaknesses and threats facing the SME and agricultural sectors whilst building on recognised strengths and developing identified opportunities for development.

- *Development of tourism.* The priority aimed to develop and improve high-quality tourism products, services and marketing in rural Wales so as to produce the maximum possible positive economic and social impact whilst safeguarding the quality of the natural and built environment.
- *Countryside management and community development.* Within this priority, measures aimed to develop facilities for the strengthening of rural areas, introduce rural services and renew village infrastructures. The success of the strategy has depended heavily upon partnership arrangements with many local organisations.

Community-based projects and schemes formed an important part of the Objective 5b programme. One example of such a scheme was that submitted by Gwynedd County Council in 1996 for funding to assist the development of a rural strategy for the county. Emphasis was placed on the need for a 'bottom-up' approach to regenerating local communities. The bid was successful, and the council allocated approximately £500,000 to implement the project. Initially it involved establishing a network of rural community officers throughout Gwynedd and their role was primarily to stimulate ideas, involve the local community in a variety of projects and schemes, and generally act as a catalyst for action.

The Welsh Office had overall responsibility for the implementation of the Rural Wales Objective 5b Single Programming Document. The Joint Monitoring Committee for the document was chaired by the Welsh Office, and contained representatives from relevant government departments, local authorities (mainly from the corporate level) and other relevant regional and local bodies such as the Countryside Council for Wales, the Welsh Development Agency, the Training and Enterprise Councils, the Agricultural Training Board and the Wales Council for Voluntary Action. The Rural Wales Objective 5b Single Programming Document is a very separate document from the Gwynedd Structure Plan and the area Local Plans. (Both are now starting to be replaced by unitary development plans in each authority.) This could be attributed to the fact that the Single Programming Document covers economic, social and community issues and is not a land use planning document *per se*. Nevertheless, the challenge for the future is to see how the Single Programming Document and land use development plans can be integrated to form, for example, some sort of economic strategy for Gwynedd.

Complementarity is pursued between the Objective 5b programme and the other European programmes in the area, and particularly with the LEADER and INTERREG programmes, rather than with land use development plans. The Single Programming Document, for example, stated that 'parts of Rural Wales will be eligible for assistance to develop links with Ireland under INTERREG II . . . cross-border links with Ireland will be developed in ways which are compatible with the Objective 5b Programme'. Similarly, the LEADER II programme for Wales states that 'the activities promoted by

LEADER groups in Wales will be complementary to those contained in the Objective 5b Rural Wales Strategy and will augment the main programme by providing support for innovative pilot projects or projects that are inherently of greater risk'. It is obvious, therefore, that planning personnel are attempting to synchronise the various policy documents even if the documents have separate purposes and are prepared under different legislation.

Other European initiatives

The LEADER Community initiative has been intended to 'permit those engaged in the rural economy to implement measures which will help develop their own potential within an overall policy for stimulating rural development', according to the LEADER II programme document for Wales. LEADER Gwynedd covered the whole of Meirionnydd and Dwyfor District Councils and Arfon Borough Council (excluding the town of Bangor), and the authority participated in both the LEADER I and LEADER II programmes. The programme area is characterised by a sparse population, 80 per cent of whom speak Welsh. The area shares many of the characteristics of the Rural Wales Objective 5b area, including a population imbalance and economic dependence on agriculture, tourism, the slate industry and energy production. The Gwynedd area was dominated economically (and environmentally) by the Trawsfynydd nuclear power station which, in the mid-1990s, was the single most important employer in the area; an announcement of its closure was made in 1997. The main issues to arise out of the LEADER I programme were:

- The need to guide groups on the degree of information gathering required.
- The need to specify expectations for monitoring and evaluating programmes.
- The need to address difficulties with cash flow for faster-spending groups.

These issues have been very helpful in the development of the LEADER II programme. The strategic aim of the LEADER II programme was to plot innovative sustainable and transferable local community integrated rural development programmes as models of excellence, which are transferable within Wales, the United Kingdom and Europe. The objectives of the LEADER Gwynedd group were as follows:

- To ensure an integrated approach by the local enterprise organisations in addressing the need to diversify the economic base of the programme area.
- To face the challenge following the closure of the dominant employer within the programme area.

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- To develop innovative projects and solutions to alleviate the impact of the loss of employment in the area.
- To share knowledge and experience with and between other European regions that face similar challenges.
- To maintain the distinctive features of the area, its environment, language and heritage.

Action included the acquisition of skills, the development of rural innovation programmes and the development of transnational cooperation programmes. Rural innovation programmes, for example, included the development of new crops and products as part of agricultural diversification, enhancing agricultural environmental management skills and studying community-based renewable energy schemes. Transnational cooperation focused on the development of a Europe-wide network of areas affected by the closure of nuclear power stations. LEADER Gwynedd comprised a partnership of public and private participants, including representatives of local authorities. It was coordinated by a company in North Wales that also acted as an information centre for the programme. Outputs of the LEADER II programme in Gwynedd included training events, tourism and community projects, an increase in private investment in the area and the creation of new employment opportunities.

PART III

Changing agendas and trajectories

12 European impacts on British planning

This chapter provides an overview of the research material discussed in Chapter 5 in relation to national and regional planning policy, and Chapters 6–11 in relation to local planning. The two key questions set at the commencement of the book can be revisited at this point. How is British planning affected by Europe? How does British planning relate to European initiatives? The discussion that follows provides answers to these questions. The first section assesses the local level and the range of European influences that can affect both statutory planning and the context of planning locally. The second section discusses national and regional planning issues within a wider debate on the remit and purpose of planning at member state level.

The local planning level

Chapters 6–11 illustrated the range of local authority planning practices that EU membership is influencing, both directly and indirectly. European Union membership was found to be influencing statutory functions (for example, development plan preparation and the operation of development control), leading to new activities through transnational cooperation on European Commission-funded projects or exchange programmes and, in some cases, to new organisational structures. The following sections explain the nature of these impacts and highlight in summary form the various categories that can be utilised to break down the influences in more detail.

EU influences on statutory development plans

European Union membership influences statutory development plans (Structure Plans, Local Plans, Unitary Development Plans and Mineral and Waste Local Plans) in three main ways: it can provide part of the context within which the plan is prepared; it can influence the formulation of individual policies; and it can require the identification of critical areas on proposal maps.

Contextual influence

In most of the case study areas there were explicit references in development plans to: the requirements of particular items of EU legislation; the eligibility of particular areas for EU financial assistance; and/or the impact on the local economy of developments in particular EU policies (for example, Strathclyde Structure Plan, which discusses the impact of EU policy on the Remoter Rural Areas of Strathclyde, and the Mid Glamorgan Structure Plan, which refers briefly to the Objective 2 programme for industrial South Wales).

The Kent Structure Plan Third Review, adopted in 1996, provides a good example of the contextual influence of EU membership on land use planning at the local level by discussing the various governmental levels that can affect planning locally. This contextual influence was found to be most pronounced in the case study areas that have been eligible for Structural Funds and in those local authorities that are spatially close to Europe. However, there is little consistency between, or even within, individual development plans. For example, whilst the Strathclyde Structure Plan discusses the impact of European policy on the Remoter Rural Areas of Strathclyde and refers to the Objective 1 status of Argyll and Bute, no mention is made of the Objective 2 status of most of the Strathclyde area, nor directly of the EU initiatives, other than RECHAR, operating in the area. Even in areas that are not eligible for structural funds, such as Leicester, EU membership was found to be influencing the context of development plan preparation through the provision of funding for innovative projects such as Environment City (partially funded through the LIFE programme). The environmental agenda developed through the Environment City project helped to shape the modifications to the Leicester Local Plan.

Influence on the formulation of individual policies

As well as influencing the general context of development plan preparation, EU membership was found to have influenced the formulation of individual policies. The clearest example of direct influence on individual policies was found in the former county of Gwynedd, with Gwynedd County Council being required to amend one of its development plan policies that sought to encourage the indigenous slate industry through development plan policies by indicating that in most situations the use of natural Welsh mineral slate would be required for all new roofs. This was viewed as contravening the requirements of the Single European Act. In other areas, local authorities are having to draft policies to control pressures arising from specific EU measures. In Northamptonshire, for example, the designation of the A14 as Euro-route 28 (one of the Trans-European Transport Networks) has contributed to increased development activity in the vicinity of the road, which the county council is trying to control through an alteration in the

Structure Plan. The alteration introduces a new policy, setting out criteria against which major business or industrial developments in the vicinity of existing and proposed motorway and principal trunk road junctions will be examined.

In contrast to the Northamptonshire example, the Kent Structure Plan also illustrates an attempt to use the development plan as a promotional tool, by a series of policies designed to maximise the benefits of EU membership and Kent's proximity to mainland Europe. Policy S3 states that 'it is strategic policy to stimulate economic activity and employment in Kent by the growth of existing industry and commerce and the attraction of new firms, capitalising on the County's particular relationship with mainland Europe'. European Union membership was also found to have influenced site-specific proposals. In the former county of Mid Glamorgan a proposed special employment site in connection with Policy E5 of the Structure Plan was subject to an objection at the Examination in Public because it was a possible habitat of the marsh fritillary butterfly, which is a protected species under the Habitats Directive.

European Union membership has therefore exerted both a 'proactive' and a 'reactive' influence on development plan policies and that influence covers the spectrum from site-specific proposals to more strategic policies. The Gwynedd example illustrates a 'reactive' influence whereby the policy had to be amended, after drafting, to accord with a non-spatial EU policy (the single European market). The Mid Glamorgan example also illustrates this 'reactive' influence. The Kent example indicates a more 'proactive' influence on a strategic policy, with the policy originally being drafted to recognise the opportunities that EU membership and Kent's spatial proximity to mainland Europe afford the county.

Identification of critical areas

EU membership is imposing, through specific directives, legal and practical obligations on local planning authorities to identify critical areas which may be subject to special protection or remedial measures within development plans. The Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive require the identification of valuable habitat locations, and are mentioned extensively in the Strathclyde Structure Plan. The Structure Plan states that 'the hierarchy of site and habitat designations brought forward to meet European and national legislation implies a corresponding hierarchy of protective policies'; Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), designated under the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive and forming part of the Natura 2000 network, are found at the top end of the hierarchy. The locations of these sites in Strathclyde are shown on folio map 4 of the Structure Plan, and are protected by an accompanying policy NAT 1: 'There shall be an absolute presumption against development in, or having an adverse effect on,

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Natura 2000 sites, designated or proposed under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives, and wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention'. The section of the Structure Plan referring to species protection states that legislative requirements for the protection of habitats and species 'cannot easily be implemented solely through the planning process . . . however, the mechanism exists through indicative policy frameworks to recognize the need to safeguard the breeding areas and territories of nationally important raptors and upland breeding waders'.

Development of plans and strategies other than statutory development plans

Membership of the European Union is one of the reasons for the proliferation of plans and strategies other than statutory development plans in recent years. Examples include regional economic development plans set out in Single Programming Documents (SPDs) that are required by the European Union's Structural Fund Regulations, local air quality management plans, waste management plans, local energy management plans and plans for the integrated management of the coastal zone. Although such plans fall outside the statutory town and country planning system in Britain, their production was found to have had an influence on town and country planning and vice versa. In Strathclyde, for example, a complex two-way relationship was found to exist between the Single Programming Document for the Objective 2 area and the Strathclyde Structure Plan. The Structure Plan has provided the framework for the Single Programming Document but the Western Scotland Objective 2 Single Programming Document for 1997–9 also tried to influence the Structure Plan, with the Commission attempting – unsuccessfully – to amend the contents to name small sites in which investment would be made over the programme period. In Kent, Thanet District Council's Planning Department was centrally involved in the preparation of the Objective 2 Single Programming Document and, because of this planning input, both the 1994–6 and the 1997–9 Single Programming Document had strong planning contexts. The role of individual staff involved in plan preparation may therefore be a contributory factor in the degree to which European issues or plans are compatible with British statutory planning documentation.

The production of plans and strategies other than statutory development plans is therefore influencing the statutory planning process through the provision of an additional context for development plans, the joint development of policies and the establishment of new policy networks. Such documents also illustrate the way in which EU membership is pushing Britain towards a broader form of spatial planning. Problems nevertheless continue to exist on the degree of integration and cohesion between the varying planning documents.

Influence on development control

Membership of the European Union was found to be exerting a number of influences over the development control process. It has: altered the context of development control decisions through, for example, the generation of particular development pressures and/or new policy initiatives; led to the introduction of new procedures, such as the requirement for an environmental assessment of certain development proposals; and directly influenced individual development control decisions. Certain EU policies have had the effect of creating development pressures in certain locations or a more general pressure for certain types of infrastructure. The Trans-European Transport Network is an example of the former. The designation of a particular road as part of the Trans-European Network was found to be leading to increased development pressure in parts of Northamptonshire. An example of the second form of EU-derived development pressure is provided by the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (EC 91/271), which required all member states to cease the practice of disposing of sewage sludge in the sea by the end of 1998. To meet the requirements of the directive, many water companies and authorities in Scotland have embarked on programmes to expand existing sewage treatment plants, construct new ones or find other ways of disposing of sewage sludge. In Strathclyde the directive led to a specific recommendation in the Structure Plan for the Water and Sewerage Authority to develop a rolling programme of treated sewage sludge disposal, jointly with local authorities, local enterprise companies, the Green Belt company and relevant greening initiatives.

European Union measures can also broaden the context of development control through support for new policy initiatives. In Kent, for example, the East Kent Energy Agency (EKEA), which was established under the SAVE II programme, prepared a design guide to disseminate advice on energy conservation to development planners. In interviews with planning officers it was felt that this design guide could have the effect of increasing the significance of energy conservation matters in building design and site layout, both factors of direct relevance to development control.

The most widespread influence of EU membership on development control procedures has been the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive, which has obliged all UK planning authorities to require, receive and evaluate environmental statements with respect to various categories of developments. However, despite the obvious European connections, few development control officers identified environmental assessment as an example of EU influence during the course of the local case study interviews. This is, perhaps, a reflection of the extent to which the requirements of this directive have become embedded in British planning statute and procedural guidance. The transposition of the Habitats Directive has also led to the introduction of new procedures for considering development proposals that affect a Special Area

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of Conservation or a Special Protection Area. These include a requirement for local planning authorities to review extant planning permissions already granted, where their implementation would be likely to have a significant effect, and the obligatory modification or revocation of such permissions in given circumstances. In Kent this requirement led the county council to issue a modification order of planning permission granted in 1964 to dispose of up to 4,500 tonnes of river dredging waste per day at Barksore Marshes on the Medway estuary. The modification order revoked the planning permission with respect to part of the original site and modified the permission, by attaching certain conditions, for the rest of the site. This action was a direct result of the designation of the site as a Special Protection Area (a category of protected area established under the Birds Directive). The local case studies did not reveal many instances of EU membership having a direct impact on development control decisions. The two examples that were uncovered were both in Kent and specifically related to the requirements of the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive.

Transnational cooperation

There is evidence from the local case studies of increasing involvement by British planners in transnational cooperation facilitated by EU membership. These partnerships have traditionally been formed on the basis of trade promotion, city marketing and similarities between participating partners, etc. For example, Strathclyde Regional Council's involvement in Metrex was on the basis of its population size and Leicester's involvement in the Barcelona Partenalia network is due to its reliance on a declining textile manufacturing base. Such networks have had only a secondary impact on land use planning, through the exchange of ideas. Of more direct relevance to British urban and regional planning are the new networks being developed that take a more active interest in spatial development issues, including the formulation of transboundary plans and strategies. Article 10 of the European Regional Development Fund has contributed to the development of such networks with its emphasis on support for studies or pilot schemes concerning regional development at Community level.

Kent County Council provides a good example of a local authority where extensive transnational links have had an influence on planning, including its 1987 link with the Regional Council of Nord-Pas de Calais. The agreement was a response to the construction of the Channel Tunnel and the implementation of the single European market. Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais together comprise the Transmanche region under the INTERREG programme, launched in 1990 to promote the economic development of border regions and to assist them in gaining the most benefit from European integration. Kent has been a recipient of large sums of INTERREG finance and close links have been encouraged between local authorities on each side

of the Channel. In addition to the Transmanche links, Kent County Council has been involved in Euroregion, which was established in June 1991 between Kent, Nord-Pas de Calais in France and Flanders, Brussels Capital and Wallonia in Belgium. Instrumental in the creation of Euroregion were the relationships built up through the three separate INTERREG programmes operating in the area, involving Nord-Pas de Calais in partnerships with Kent, Flanders and Wallonia, respectively.

Data gathering

One specific impact of EU membership of direct relevance to planning has been the introduction of obligations to gather new kinds of data. Legal requirements (for example, the need for all Single Programming Documents to be accompanied by a local State of the Environment report, and the requirements of the Seveso Directive) have been supplemented in recent years by transnational data-gathering initiatives often stimulated through various networks. Data-gathering exercises are often the first step in the development of new strategies or policies. Gwynedd Council, for example, has been involved in a project on rural change funded under the PACTE programme, which aimed to facilitate the development of policies for balanced and sustainable rural communities through the collection of data on rural change. Work funded under PACTE has led to important changes in Gwynedd's approach to economic development, with greater emphasis being given to local dialogue and community involvement. The Slate Valleys Initiative, a programme of community-based regeneration of the slate valleys of Gwynedd, was strongly influenced by the PACTE programme, and this, in turn, is now influencing the preparation of Gwynedd's Unitary Development Plan. In another example of pan-European data gathering, Strathclyde Regional Council was involved in Esturiales. This is a pan-European partnership of authorities responsible for the sustainable management of Europe's major estuaries. It is hard to discern the precise influence that such initiatives have on British planning but they appear, on the basis of the local case studies, to broaden the knowledge base of planners and help influence the context of development plan preparation; they also often lead to the preparation of non-statutory plans and strategies.

EU influence on organisational structures

Membership of the European Union is also having an impact on administrative structures affecting local authority planning and professional planning personnel. The nature of this influence was found to be complex and varied considerably between case study areas. Three forms of influence were identified: the establishment of new bodies external to the local authority; the

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impact on corporate local authority structure; and the impact upon the structure of planning departments.

Establishment of bodies external to the local authority

Membership of the European Union is fostering the development of innovative structures that involve local planning authorities in partnerships with other disciplines and other authorities. The impetus for the establishment of these structures comes from a variety of sources and includes: the requirement to prepare and monitor Single Programming Documents; a desire to network more effectively with Brussels (including lobbying); and the impetus provided by enhanced powers awarded to the devolved or regional levels of government and their engagement with Europe. It also comes as a specific response to European issues and non-Structural Fund measures. The Strathclyde European Partnership is an example of an external body being established to meet the requirement to prepare and subsequently monitor the Single Programming Document and its interaction with development plans. In other case study areas it has proved more difficult to accommodate the requirements of the Structural Funds within existing planning structures. For example, the absence in Wales of formal machinery for developing integrated cross-sectoral rural development plans led to difficult and protracted negotiations with Commission officials in the autumn of 1993 over the rural Wales Objective 5b draft Single Programming Document. Representatives of various EC departments, including DG V, DG VI, DG XI and DG XVI, tabled no fewer than seventy-one questions in response to the first draft of the Single Programming Document, and in subsequent informal meetings called for the Single Programming Document to be revised to reflect a more integrated development strategy, with clear objectives, targets and an identifiable 'thread of logic' running through it. This caused delays in securing final agreement to the Single Programming Document and the inclusion of programmes that had to be developed with more haste than was desirable. Other examples of external bodies established by the case study authorities as a specific response to European issues include the East Kent Energy Agency and the Wales European Centre.

Impact on corporate local authority structure

As well as leading to new organisational structures outside local authorities, EU membership has meant important changes taking place in internal local authority structures, aimed at facilitating greater involvement with the European Commission and other EU member states. An important motive for such changes has been the financial incentive of greater access to EU funds. For example, most of the case study authorities had appointed European officers (whose remit included raising awareness of EU policy initiatives and funding

opportunities) or had reallocated existing staff time to this exercise. Union membership is also leading some authorities to prepare European strategies, which may have an impact on the delivery of land use planning services.

Impact on the structure of the planning department

The case studies also revealed a trend towards the direct Europeanisation of planning departments. This trend was most pronounced in Kent County Council. Kent started with a central corporate European team but, increasingly, individual departments within the county council are developing their own European expertise. In most other authorities there were varying degrees of planner involvement in corporate European teams, and the preparation of bids for EU finance and in some instances responsibility for leading on EU issues were vested in the planning departments (for example, Northamptonshire County Council).

Impact of the European Union on local planning activity

European Union policies were found to be influencing the activities of local planning authorities in a number of ways. The evidence from the case studies suggests that EU influence on individual local planning authorities depends upon a variety of factors, including:

- *Eligibility for particular EU measures.* Eligibility for assistance from the Structural Funds appears to increase local awareness of EU developments in direct proportion to the size of the receipts. Measures such as INTERREG and Article 10 of the European Regional Development Fund are also contributing to the Europeanisation of planning through the development of cross-border strategies and plans, the discussion of common issues and the preparation of joint funding bids.
- *Individual and corporate factors.* The corporate policies of the local authority (that is, its overall stance towards the European Union) and the attitudes of key officials (chief executive, chief planning officer and European officer, for example) appear to be an important factor in determining the degree of Europeanisation of the organisational structure and the level of involvement in transnational cooperation. Local government reorganisation would also appear to have assisted the process of Europeanisation through the opportunity to develop new corporate strategies and the appointment of new personnel.

Having addressed the results of the local case study research, the next section discusses European impacts on the national and regional planning policy levels within Britain.

The national and regional planning levels

In contrast to the local level, the impact of the European Union on British national and regional planning policies has, to date, been extremely limited. The reasons for this relate to the function of national and regional planning policy documentation in England, Scotland and Wales as policy documents within the framework of the British land use planning system, coupled with a political preference on the part of some governments to avoid mentioning Europe if at all possible. Governments in the period since the 1980s have also utilised departmental circulars to explain more legislative and procedural changes brought about by EC directives. Both Conservative and Labour governments have transposed EC directives into the British process through the introduction of regulations and circulars, and where European issues had to be addressed within national and regional documents reference was more likely to be made to the British transposition instruments. This appears to have been a deliberate policy.

There are some explicit references to European directives and initiatives in existing policy notes, but these are restricted to discussion of measures that impose a direct obligation upon the British land use planning system, notably in the preparation of development plans and the control of development. EC directives that are highlighted within this category are predominantly those relating to environmental assessment, natural habitats and wild birds, waste framework plans and air quality, and can be grouped under the headings of 'environmental measures' and 'nature conservation'. Other directives, programmes and initiatives that have an indirect impact on the land use planning process in Britain are implicitly referred to in national and regional planning documents, but since they do not explicitly form part of the statutory land use planning process – as it is defined in Britain – they merely provide the context for planning policy and decision making. Initiatives within this category include the Common Agriculture and Common Fisheries Policies, Structural Fund assistance, Trans-European Transport Networks and transnational cooperation measures such as INTERREG. Very few of the current national and regional planning documents have been formulated directly as a consequence of requirements in EU policies. The preparation of planning guidance notes on nature conservation and pollution control in the case of England and Scotland occurred partly to implement EU directives but also as a consequence of developments in domestic policies. Where the government is under an obligation to implement directives, it is achieved through the amendment or revision of existing documents. National planning documents cover a broad range of planning topics and are prepared predominantly to provide national strategic guidance to local planning authorities in relation to the British planning system. In the view of officials in the planning divisions of central government it was not their function to provide a detailed breakdown of international policies even if today it may

be possible to suggest that some of these issues possess a strong European context.

The first Labour Minister of Planning after 1997, Richard Caborn, MP, indicated a new willingness on the part of central government to recognise how and the extent to which the British planning system already interacts with Europe and provides an important context in the formulation of strategic planning policies and planning decision making. His declared aim in early 1998, to enhance the European dimension of British planning, opened up a new context for planning at the national, regional and local levels. Rather than the British government ring-fencing itself from Europe, treating itself as a 'planning island', Britain is now a member state committed to an integrated and cooperative single market, with a prominent role to play in the development of spatial planning following the release of the final draft of the European Spatial Development Perspective (CSD 1999). Future policy could therefore not only witness more references to the EU origin of planning-related policies within national and regional planning documents, but additionally greater reference to the European context of British planning through the finances and resources available through structural funds, pollution control and waste management, transnational cooperation and coastal zone management. In essence, the scope of national and regional planning policy guidance could well be broadened to include matters that – previously within central government – were regarded as non-statutory land use and therefore outside the scope of the documents. This could be particularly true in consequence of devolution, as each of the countries uses its new-found planning policy discretion to set its own planning agenda, interact more formally with Europe, and redefine planning as a strategic coordinating mechanism rather than strictly as a statutory land use activity.

European planning issues and political preferences

The degree to which Europe influences and impacts upon British planning will always be limited so long as a narrow definition of planning prevails in Britain. That definition, concentrating on the preparation of statutory plans and the control of development, does form the core of the planning function within the United Kingdom, and it has been in existence for well over fifty years. But planning is a good deal more than its statutory core. We cannot help but feel that local government has recognised this broader context for many years, since being required, for example, to bid for European Structural Fund assistance and for funding for the establishment of transnational cooperation networks between various European member states. Planners, predominantly, within local authorities have actively pursued the Europeanisation of their work by concentrating on forging European alliances at the local level, and by actively bidding for the resourcing of particular projects to address a range of social, economic and environmental problems

within their local areas. Some local authorities, as we highlighted in the local case study profiles in Chapters 6–11, have been extremely successful in receiving millions of pounds worth of European grants, often in partnership with organisations from the private, voluntary and public sectors. Richard Caborn's statement of enlightenment towards the European dimension of British planning dating from January 1998 may therefore be viewed with some suspicion. To a local government audience – particularly those authorities that have been eligible for European assistance or who have been the recipient of EU funding from various programmes or who have had to amend development plans or the decision-making context of development control – the European dimension of their work may have always been present. Perhaps it is more useful, therefore, to suggest that Mr Caborn's statement should actually be viewed from the perspective of central government, where the European dimension of planning policies at both national and regional levels has indeed been largely absent. Indeed, we may go further and suggest that in the late 1980s, and for most of the 1990s, local government leapfrogged central government in responding (and being prepared to respond) to a European context for British planning. Mr Caborn's January 1998 statement may therefore be seen as an acknowledgement that it was time for the national level to catch up with the advances and initiatives in planning, broadly defined, that were already under way at the local level.

The scope for British planning to adopt a broader perspective is certainly present. But whether the momentum for the broadening of planning's definition is maintained over the next few years is largely dependent on the degree to which national politicians are prepared to back the European dimension of British plan making and development control, and to give enhanced credence to the broader social, economic and environmental reasons for the British planning system's existence. Since Richard Caborn switched ministerial portfolios and was replaced with a new Planning Minister the political drive to the Europeanisation of British planning has not been as noticeable within the Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions. This is regrettable, since the Europeanisation move had provided a new set of ambitious but welcome challenges for the planning profession within the United Kingdom. In essence, discussion of enhancing the European dimension of British planning provided the system and professionals with a much needed tonic at a time when the 'vision thing' in planning appears increasingly absent (Tewdwr-Jones 1999b). Of the national planning documents released in England since May 1997, for example, it remains the case that the European dimension of British planning at the national level remains relatively absent. This is partly the consequence of the substantive planning subjects covered by the new policy guidance but it also reflects the degree to which adopting a broader ethos of what we mean by planning has not permeated from the International Planning Division of the DETR to its neighbouring Development Plans Division where the national planning policy

documents are largely formulated. Depending on one's view of the merits of adopting a broader definition of planning over the retention of a narrow statutory perspective, such policy-making nuances within central government may not be an issue worth pursuing at length. But they could become an issue within Britain if – as a consequence of devolution – Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland decide to attempt the broader definition for the purpose of strategic policy coordination and policy entrepreneurship, thereby leaving English planning guidance particularly archaic in content and format. In the future it may also be perfectly possible for Planning Ministers from each of the devolved countries to attend Council of Ministers' meetings. There are already moves afoot in Scotland and Wales to produce national spatial planning perspectives for those countries that will sit alongside their respective national planning policies. These broader national spatial frameworks will attempt to combine the policies of the various agencies of governance towards a range of social, economic and environmental issues; there can be little doubt that Europe, European initiatives and the European Spatial Development Perspective will be contextual issues that will be addressed within the documents. The attitude of the devolved countries thus appears to be one of acknowledging the restricted nature of the current national planning policy statements within the land use planning system and now moving towards devising new frameworks that can address the contextual issues that impact upon or influence the operation of the planning system in a much more explicit way. Although this usefully combines land use planning policies with the broader social, economic and environmental reasons for planning intervention, and coordinates the various policies of the many agencies of governance that now exist and possess a stake in the planning process, the degree to which this will and can be operationalised in a constantly changing political, global and kaleidoscopic world has yet to be considered in practice. This is the subject of Chapter 13.

13 Conclusion

We conclude our discussion of the European dimension of British planning by considering a number of thematic and conceptual issues. These relate to the future European aspect of British planners' work and their recognition and acknowledgement of the European root to policies and of the European opportunities that may exist, and the different scales that planning may operate within in future. There follows discussion of the competing claims on planning in the twenty-first century, how planning as a governance process is stretched across various tiers and scales and how this may cause political and practical problems. The discussion concludes by addressing some broad European issues that could form a context for future research.

The European challenge for British planners

In view of the increasing Europeanisation of planning processes and networking within the United Kingdom, we consider it vital for actors in the process to develop the capacity for thinking in terms of EU space and spatial relationships, and to relate to non-British modes of planning thought. This is essentially an extension of one of the key points in the UK government's *Modernising Planning* project (DETR 1998b). It is also vital in the context of the enhancement of the regional level of policy making within England and the implementation of devolution in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Accordingly, and in view of the various and kaleidoscopic scales upon which planning sits, later in the chapter we offer a new typology of planning in the hope that it may help those involved to map out the different spatial scales at which planning now operates and within which planning professionals increasingly need to work. It is not merely in relation to the different spatial scales that planning needs to be considered, but also in the relationships and links between different scales or political contexts. Cross-border planning, for example, could potentially become a significant issue on the Scottish and Welsh borders with England.

From the point of view of British local planning authorities, experience suggests that the existing expertise and institutional arrangements are severely

stretched in their attempts to prepare project bids for funding from European sources. Problems have been encountered in defining what potential outcomes and benefits from a transnational project on themes such as these could be, and in identifying suitable partners in other member states. Many of those working in local land use planning departments do not have a ready grasp of the transnational scale and parameters of transnational programmes, such as INTERREG, and have difficulty in thinking creatively about realistic proposals where the transnational dimension offers genuine added value. Several authorities employ European officers, often with planning backgrounds, who may possess a better grasp of the Commission's logic in respect of some Community Instruments. The problem sometimes is that these people have no planning background or no detailed expertise in local planning. Similarly, experts on local planning and urban regeneration issues, who formulate the project ideas and may be familiar with the European Regional Development Fund, may nevertheless have difficulty with the concept of working interregionally with their opposite numbers in other countries, and certainly have difficulty grasping the potential significance of the European Spatial Development Perspective. Given the broad level of discussion within which the Perspective is pitched, perhaps that should not be viewed with surprise. Nevertheless, already since the publication of the final draft of the European Spatial Development Perspective in May 1999, attitudes have sometimes been dismissive, not comprehending the supra-national spatial scale that it represents. This has also led to the emergence of an 'isolating view' by individuals who believe European spatial planning issues have nothing to do with them.

Second, in the longer term, it may be very much in the interests of all planning authorities to pay attention to transnational cooperation and the logic behind its thinking. It is hoped that the final version of the European Spatial Development Perspective, together with the Study Programme on European Spatial Planning, will provide a framework for policy thinking that provides a stimulus for local and regional authorities. Although the European Spatial Development Perspective is seen by many as a top-down exercise that does not relate to local concerns, INTERREG is potentially able to counteract this criticism, as it is designed to bridge the gap. It contributes to European integration by promoting coherence among the regions of Europe, and contributes to local concerns by supporting tangible projects. By understanding the infranational context, it may be possible to apply the European Spatial Development Perspective in ways that will draw upon local knowledge and achieve a synthesis between those who understand the European policy context and those who understand local development issues. Regional bodies will be well placed to undertake this task, and indeed will be failing in their duties if they do not.

A typology of spatial planning scales

In order to consider the European dimension of British planning in the future, we consider it useful to develop a typology of spatial scales within which spatial planning either currently operates or will develop to a greater extent in the future. The terminology associated with the different scales of EU spatial planning sometimes causes confusion to those unfamiliar with the EU scale of planning. A number of words are used to refer to the various categories of planning cooperation across national borders, ranging from cross-border planning through transnational and interregional planning to supranational planning. A typology is proposed in the hope that it may clarify understanding of the distinctions between the different spatial scales at which spatial planning may operate in the EU context. The typology proposed here may be compared with the three-level structure of European level, transnational level and regional/local level proposed in the European Spatial Development Perspective (CSD 1999), by replacing it with six levels of planning that relate to the European Union's range of spatial planning instruments. Figure 13.1 sets out a purely descriptive typology of the scales at which plans and planning instruments do, or may, exist.

Supranational planning is perhaps the easiest to define of the non-domestic scales of planning. It refers to planning for the territory of a group of countries as a whole. It has, of course, attained a high EU profile with the *Europe 2000* and *Europe 2000+* documents (CEC 1991, 1994) and with the European Spatial Development Perspective because the European Union is a jurisdiction. However, the latter condition does not necessarily have to be met. Work by the Council of Europe on the European Spatial/Regional Planning Schema in the 1980s (see Williams 1996: 79–80) is also an example of supranational planning, as was the 1991 *Perspectives in Europe* study by the Dutch government (RPD 1991; Williams 1996: 86–7). The spatial scale

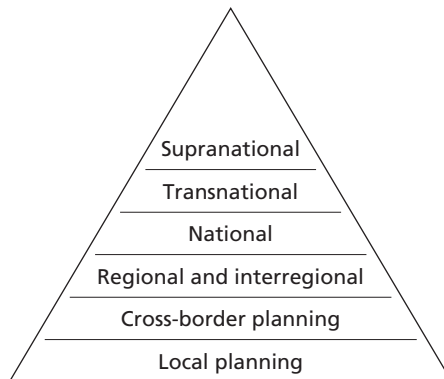


Figure 13.1 Typology of scales of EU spatial planning

tends to be very large, although not necessarily so. The strategy for Benelux is also an example of supranational planning on a more compact spatial scale (Zonneveld and Faludi 1997).

Transnational planning is defined as planning for regions of Europe or of the European Union that are composed of contiguous parts of more than one member state. Thus the areas designated under the INTERREG programme such as the North Sea region fall within the definition of this spatial scale.

National planning, in the sense of spatial planning for the whole of a national territory, has not up to now been a feature of planning in Britain despite the existence of national planning policies. It has nevertheless been a formative element in the experience of some of those who developed the European Spatial Development Perspective and INTERREG, notably from the Netherlands and France (Albrechts 1997; Martin and ten Velden 1997). Within the United Kingdom consideration is being given to this scale by the Royal Town Planning Institute, stimulated by the advent of the European Spatial Development Perspective and of devolution to Scotland, Wales and the English regions. The Institute has published a feasibility document assessing the potential for a National Spatial Planning Framework for the United Kingdom (Wong *et al.* 2000) and specifically highlighting the United Kingdom's relationship with Europe as one reason why a new policy level is required. Meanwhile, national spatial planning at the levels of Scotland and Wales is proceeding following the elections in 1999 for the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly, with moves afoot in both countries to develop their own national spatial planning documents (see Tewdwr-Jones 2001b, c).

The terms 'transnational planning' and 'interregional planning' are sometimes used interchangeably. However, it is helpful to draw a distinction. There are two bases upon which to propose a distinction. One is whether the planning subject is necessarily one continuous area composed of contiguous parts of neighbouring member states. The other is whether an explicit emphasis is placed on cooperation between sub-national levels of government.

Regional and interregional planning refers to spatial planning for regions of a member state, plus interregional cooperation in planning between such regions where they are not contiguous but do share some planning problem. Interregional cooperation may occur, for example, between regions planning for coalfield closures, adjusting to the reduction of the fishing industry or developing policies to relieve tourism overload. The European Spatial Development Perspective defines transnational planning areas as 'geographically continuous areas' (CSD 1998: 67). The discussion that follows in the European Spatial Development Perspective supports the distinction proposed, developing the idea that transnational planning refers to planning for contiguous areas for which cooperation at any or all levels of government may be required in order to forge the links between EU policies

and those at local and regional level. The discussion of interregional planning (CSD 1998: 70) refers to thematic issues that are the responsibility of regional or municipal planning authorities in different member states who have similar planning issues to face, where cooperation is beneficial but without them forming a contiguous territory. While INTERREG IIC programmes fall into the transnational category, most of the Community initiatives, notably the spatial planning programme TERRA, economic development programmes such as RECHAR and KONVER and networking programmes such as RECITE are examples of the interregional category of action.

Cross-border planning essentially refers to planning policy at the scale of the city, conurbation and functional urban region for an urbanised area that happens to be crossed by a national border. It is therefore the appropriate term for local planning exercises at the spatial scales of a city district up to agglomeration and city-region scales. It should be applied to planning exercises which differ from those for other cities only because a national border happens to run through the urban agglomeration or city-region. Examples include Lille–Mouscron, Saarbrücken–Saarlouis and the rather more complex MHAL (Maastricht–Heerlen–Aachen–Liège) cooperation. Of course, cross-border planning poses particular professional challenges in many cases, especially on border areas between the European Union and former Communist Party states (van der Boel 1994), but the spatial scale is still often no more than that of the city-region.

INTERREG IIA extended this definition to include maritime borders. This poses little conceptual difficulty in the cases where a fixed link is proposed or in operation, such as the Channel Tunnel or the Øresund link between Denmark and Sweden, but requires a rather greater stretch of the imagination in such cases as the Celtic INTERREG linking west Wales and eastern Ireland. Nevertheless, it is argued that these are also best understood as examples of the cross-border, rather than transnational, scale of spatial planning. This scale of planning continues under INTERREG IIIA.

Local planning, the sixth level of the planning scale, at which local plans are prepared and individual proposals for development are authorised and implemented, is clearly important in the EU context as well as domestically, since projects supported by the Structural Funds, or developed through INTERREG and other Community Instruments, are often essentially local projects and must be integrated into the processes of local planning and control of development.

In respect of the horizontal dimension, the key issue is whether spatial planning instruments play a role in achieving some coherence of policy at each of these spatial scales in respect of policies that have a spatial impact and effect, whether or not they are explicitly spatial. At the EU level itself, this is necessary, not least in the context for future reform of the Structural Funds. As the European Spatial Development Perspective is a non-binding document, its role or application would take the form of providing the means

whereby the degree of spatial coherence or conflict could be identified, so that the responsible authorities could be advised or told (depending on powers) to make adjustments. The scale at which this may apply could be any of those proposed above.

The competing claims on planning

The future spatial planning systems of Europe will sit across a multifarious administrative and political framework and, aside from the tensions and conflicts inherent within this matrix, two other sets of seemingly irreconcilable dimensions exist. These are, first, the vested interests, which may be summarised as territorial, social, sectoral or policy-based in character. And second, there are the networks of partnerships, collaboration and concordats that are arranged across both the administrative and political framework and the vested interests, in order to achieve implementation. The key issue for policy makers from now on will be how to reconcile the apparently irreconcilable tensions inherent within the new European governance of spatial planning and how to meet the perceived high expectations of a range of government tiers, agencies, organisations, businesses and the public on why spatial planning exists and what spatial planning – and indeed the new political processes more generally – are expected to deliver.

Pan-European spatial planning policies will impact on national governments as much as on sub-national governments, or on the new forms of partnerships and networks that have been established over the traditional governmental boundaries. In some cases, the development of a European spatial planning polity and policy will have occurred simultaneously with member states' attempts to bolster or revise national and sub-national planning mechanisms, such as through devolution and regionalism. As planners attempt to build up these new intra-state processes they will be required to consider how external networks and 'super-strategic' thinking need to emerge outside their new institutions. Constant discussion of restructuring at the national and sub-national levels can additionally eclipse on-going discussion of the local level of governance, at which scale more sets of institutional restructuring could be occurring, and it is important that the two are considered simultaneously.

The problems of devising this new type of spatial planning matrix, aspects of which are both formal and informal, rest on two grounds. First, there is the possibility that a European spatial policy framework will raise expectations if it is imagined to be a panacea for every member state's ills. Second, there is a likelihood of tensions nevertheless occurring between the expectations placed on the pan-European spatial planning initiative and member states' national and sub-national planning policies formulated through other, perhaps more traditional, means that may have emerged from separate series of negotiation and consultation mechanisms either at the devolved or local

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levels of governance or by partnership and networking. The European Spatial Development Perspective should provide a broad point of reference to inform the development of national and sub-national planning policies, but there will be scope for its intentions to be ignored if democratically elected representatives within member states wish to exercise their discretion. Both issues can be addressed provided participants are informed of the purpose and role of the European initiative as a coordinating framework within the wider policy-making machinery. But the difficulties will only be accentuated if too heavy reliance is placed on European spatial planning policy as a separate policy process (almost in the abstract) from the frameworks in existence within and pursued by other agencies of governance.

Meeting member state spatial policy objectives at the local level is a case in point, and exemplifies the tensions that can exist between national, regional and local scales of governance when some of these institutions act as the agents of the member state in policy implementation even though they are separately elected autonomous agencies with their own spatial policy agendas. This dilemma in relation to the relationship between tiers of government could be described as a 'dual tension' between high politics (European cooperation and national agenda setting) and low politics (spatial planning policy implementation), and will be apparent in the expectations placed on the new structures of governance (Tewdwr-Jones 2001a). Therefore in some member states we may witness a dual push of expectation towards broadening the institutional framework of spatial planning policy making vertically (from the European Commission to member states, regional governance and local governance) and horizontally (through partnerships and networks that transcend traditional governmental boundaries), while broadening the substantive notion of how spatial planning should be defined and what it is supposed to achieve.

Planning as a function of government has changed substantially at the commencement of the twenty-first century compared with that existing in the post-war period (Healey 1999; Tewdwr-Jones 1999a, b). What has occurred is basically a two-level process. From the institutional perspective, the policy interpretation of the statutory function of planning has shifted towards an enabling role, both for the private sector and for the other agencies of governance. From the political perspective, the planning process has also been affected by political, socio-economic and environmental changes outside planning. Both these processes have meant that planning has emerged at the end of the century as a very different beast from what it was just ten years before. In short, planning's very existence as a state entity has been, and is continuing to be, transformed completely.

These are important contexts to bear in mind. They are on-going processes of modernisation, reform and restructuring that constantly impinge upon and reshape spatial planning. When changes occur either to planning itself or to the agencies charged with utilising the planning system, it is inevitable that

proposals are put forward to amend, revise, abolish or implement. The devolution issue is a case in point. The potential now exists within devolved or regional agencies for very different planning systems to be born. Even without statutory powers to implement radical planning reform, the scope exists for changes to be brought about through amendments of the policy processes that can be just as caustic as the impact caused by statutory changes. This has not gone unnoticed in each of the devolved regions of Britain, where suggestions are already being advocated to supposedly improve policy-making and governance, partly intended to establish clearly definable separate agendas unique to those countries compared with the *status quo*.

All three demand generators of political and institutional restructuring – ownership, inclusiveness and distinctiveness – are potentially at odds with each other, and will also yield significant changes to the planning process as a partnership process in unique forms of governance. The questions we need to pose here relate to the ability of the planning system to keep pace with this restructuring process and with planning's transformation into a strategic enabling activity within a much broader framework of governance. This book is another contribution to the on-going debate of attempting to pin down immense restructuring, make sense of the institutional context of political reform, and acknowledge the purpose, structure and function of spatial planning as it exists between different spatial and political scales. We end this discussion with reference to a number of interrelated points. These issues place their discussion within a broader political and institutional governmental context and attempt to consider planning as part of a wider process of change, the like of which cannot be ignored (Tewdwr-Jones 1999c, 2001a):

- Planning as a governmental process of the state has been transformed to become a function of governance.
- In calling for a degree of compatibility across the new agencies responsible for the governance of planning, it is necessary to consider the nature of horizontal relations between agents of governance at member state, regional and local levels.
- Compatibility across agencies of governance also needs to be interpreted by assessment of the vertical relations between the other tiers of governance, since it is at these processes that degrees of power and responsibility and state objectives lie. This relates to the formal legal power structures that exist, from European, to member state, to regional agency, to local agency.
- The surface relations and interactions and shared understandings between the agencies of governance are underpinned at the sub-surface level by political interaction and strategic behaviour (Phelps and Tewdwr-Jones 2000).

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- All these local and regional agencies of governance within member states will possess varied remits, agendas and objectives that could make compatibility difficult to achieve; such potentially conflicting remits will not disappear as a consequence of the perceived compatibility of agendas.
- A desire to produce one type of framework or strategic vision, such as a European perspective or a sub-regional plan, could well satisfy a planning desire at one particular level but will only be one of the national and interregional aspects of the inter-agency collaborative effort that will require addressing.
- The notion of broadening the communicative culture across agencies of governance is desirable but should not be underestimated through the political and institutional perspective of what planning is there to achieve and who it serves.
- Enhancing sub-national levels of policy making in planning will be successful only if a check is made on the simultaneous development of other forms of institutional restructuring. Each restructuring project raises the spectre of high expectations.

Overall, in the designing of new processes of governance and political administration that will invariably impact upon spatial planning policy and the broader planning polity, it is important to recognise the difference between new approaches that foster enhanced forms of regional agencies of governance, with a higher level of political commitment and institutional inclusiveness, from new approaches that are intended to assist or replace existing policy-making structures in a much more delegated way. Attempts to broaden planning into spatial policy making should be encouraged in the modernising processes of Western governments and governance, but the wider objectives of Europe, together with the aims of member states, national, regional and local agencies of governance – all of whom possess a stake in the policy process and potentially determine the future allocation and development of space – should be considered simultaneously.

Conclusion: developing a new research agenda

Since 1993 the European Commission has sought to develop the concept of a network of spatial research institutes, which would collectively form a research observatory. Formal agreement on this concept was not forthcoming, but in 1998 a proposal for a pilot study programme, to test out the concept of research conducted by a network of research institutes, was agreed. A research agenda was negotiated through the Committee on Spatial Development and an EU-wide network of research groups was selected. The study programme itself ran from the end of 1998 to early 2000. Some of the national participants including the UK team (comprising University College

London and the University of Newcastle upon Tyne) also produced national reports (DETR 2000a).

The central focus of the study programme was to develop policy ideas to operationalise the concept of a polycentric settlement structure and in particular to develop the idea that there should be a new urban–rural relationship in all spatial policy making. The argument is that policy making for urban areas or municipalities is too often undertaken by institutions and jurisdictions separate from those for rural areas, and that this leads not only to a lack of coordination but also to distinct policy agendas which are pursued independently, in spite of the very high level of interaction between urban areas, suburbs and semi-urbanised rural areas. This work, which considers new approaches to addressing urban and rural problems, is already being considered within national planning departments in Britain. As a broad contribution to the debate, we conclude by highlighting in summary form some conceptual issues that might form a research framework for European spatial planning governance, some aspects of which have been presented elsewhere (Tewdwr-Jones 2001a).

The framework comprises several dimensions, each of which summarises the range of institutional, political, governmental and scalar factors overlapping one another and demonstrates the complexity and interdependence inherent within the new and emerging forms of European spatial planning that could impact on the British planning system in the future. The overall picture is of a complex web of relationships in a new kaleidoscopic planning landscape. This complexity rests on the independence, autonomy, relationships and interdependence that exist and will develop in the future between different levels of governance, between different agencies of governance, on the degree of political will and commitment displayed towards higher non-legally binding institutional tiers, and the legal and formal planning processes that are endemic at the national and sub-national levels to member states. These interdependences will yield new forms of working, new forms of partnerships and networks that transcend traditional political and administrative boundaries. If anything, the new informal relationships will shadow the traditional relationships. The task for planners will be how to relate the two sets of relationships so that policy agendas and the substantive issues are addressed in meaningful, efficient and effective means while delivering to the audiences and users of planning on various spatial scales. Different issues may well require new (and, to the lay observer, confusing) patterns of networks emerging between appropriate agencies. One of the most interesting questions will be how member states' planning processes transform and materialise as these new sets of relationships in European spatial planning develop further. Since so much will depend on the political commitment towards this highly complex kaleidoscopic planning pattern, it seems likely that different networks developed differently at different points of time and at different scales will emerge, making the institutional landscape of planning

in Europe even more intricate but just as fascinating as an area of academic study.

A research framework for European spatial planning and governance

- *Theoretical and spatial dimensions.* The politics and geography of ‘scale’ and scalar relationships between tiers of governance; the hollowing out of the nation state and future roles of member states in policy delivery and planning in particular; what does the future hold for a Europe of the regions? Tensions and relationships between member states, governments and governance – where does spatial planning sit within this framework? Defining ‘institutions’ within the European Union, particularly in relation to planning; narrow or broader concepts of planning – statutory (legal) or cooperative? Top-down planning perspectives and/or ‘sum of the parts’ planning in Europe?
- *Governance dimensions.* Relations and interdependence across two axes: vertical axes – changing relationships between the European Union, Europe (territorially) and member states, regions and local areas; horizontal axes – between the European Commission and member states – integration, compatibility and compromise; the political will and determination to integrate and cooperate; relationships between member states, sub-national and local agencies of governance – institutions as agents of higher political tiers.
- *Policy dimensions.* Substantive and policy areas across and within Europe – two axes in spatial planning: vertical axes – the European Spatial Development Perspective, member states’ national planning policy, devolution, decentralisation, sub-national, regional and local on the one hand, and city-regional or urban-regional on the other; horizontal axes – member states’ planning systems and the compatibility of and differences between their forms, and distinguishing between narrow and broader concepts of planning, cf. land use planning and the social, economic, environmental and cultural issues that planning exists to assist in; policy coverage within planning from local to spatial and the division of legal and policy responsibilities between different tiers and agencies of change.
- *Audience and agency dimensions.* The high expectations placed on planning across various tiers and agencies of governance; who does planning exist to serve? Dilemmas between economic, environmental, social, community and cultural issues; the need for planning to be seen to be facilitating or enabling; the discretion available to individual agencies and the relationship between their higher agency commitments and their own responsibilities and audiences; fostering community and social inclusion, economic competitiveness and environmental sustainability

across Europe, and the pressures inherent within member states at different levels and with different degrees of commitment to deliver; on-going concern with the relationship between the urban and rural, urban and regional, core and periphery, prosperous and less prosperous.

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