

A geographical examination of the twentieth century theory
and practice of selected village development in England

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By

DAVID JOHN PARSONS



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ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with the planning of rural settlement in England during the twentieth century, and in particular with the application and the impact of the principle of selected village development. Both the development of planning legislation and the 'philosophical basis of rural settlement planning are examined in detail.

Since 1947 the concept of selected village development has come to dominate the planning of rural settlement. This concept is examined at length with particular attention paid to the relationship between selected village development and central place theory. The progressive adoption of policies of selected village development since the early 'fifties, has usually been related to systems of settlement classification. The operation of classification schemes is examined at length and is supplemented with an examination of the spatial inequalities between five different classifications, in the Isle of Wight, Huntingdonshire, Norfolk, Nottinghamshire, and West Sussex.

The impact of selected village development policies is studied in detail through two case studies, one of a 'pressure' area (South Nottinghamshire), and the other of a 'remoter' rural area (North Norfolk). Besides a more general study of these areas, twelve villages are studied in considerable detail through a questionnaire survey of a sample of households in each village. The results of nearly four hundred household interviews form the basis for a detailed discussion of socio-economic patterns and processes in the study areas.

The concluding chapter presents a summary of the thesis and also an assessment of the principle findings. Specific suggestions for consideration as improvements to the planning system are presented together with the general conclusion that selected village development policies, appropriately modified, represent the most practical policy alternative for planning rural settlement in England.

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FOREWORD

The object of this thesis is to achieve a better understanding of the processes of rural settlement planning in England, and of the impact of policies of selected village development on rural settlement. The detailed objectives of the research are discussed at length in Chapter One.

My interest in rural settlement planning started with undergraduate research on villages in Yorkshire, West Sussex and subsequently in central Norfolk. These early studies indicated that there was a lack of correspondance between the written planning policies concerning development control in rural settlement, and what was actually happening in the villages. As the present study has progressed it has seemed increasingly profitable to develop the research as a constructive criticism of selected village development policies.

This thesis is the result of over five years work, of which the first three years were as a full-time postgraduate student at the University of Nottingham, with a further two years of part-time work whilst working full-time as a member of faculty at the University of Sussex. This rather long timescale is partly as a result of an injury sustained at Nottingham which resulted in the loss of about six months work. The study started with the literature search in October, 1973, progressing through field-work in 1974 and 1975, to the computer analysis of the questionnaire survey in late summer and

autumn of 1976. The two years of part-time work in 1977 and 1978, have largely been associated with writing-up.

The length of the writing-up period is reflected in the length of the completed thesis. This is substantially longer than I would have liked but quite unavoidable, since I considered it to be important to present the results of the village surveys as fully as possible, for the possible benefit of other scholars. For this reason each of the chapters (except Chapters One and Thirteen, which are respectively the introduction and concluding chapters) contains a summary. In addition there is a complete summary of the main findings of the research in Chapter Thirteen, and a detailed assessment of the significant results of the study in respect of rural settlement planning.

I am perhaps the last person to assess the value of this thesis, but I would like to acknowledge some of the personal benefits. The experience of conducting a large research study has been both rewarding and illuminating. I have also gained valuable experience from the various methods and approaches used in this study, in particular from the design and instigation of the questionnaire surveys, and in their subsequent computer analysis. This has in turn fostered a general interest in the application of statistical techniques, and sample surveys, to applied geographical research. I sincerely hope that there will also be an external value to the thesis, and particularly in encouraging a re-appraisal of the way in which town and country planning legislation is applied to rural settlement in this country. To this end I have presented a number of specific recommendations for improved planning practice in the concluding chapter of this study, in addition to some personal observations on areas which need further research. I do not suggest that these recommendations would put all the problems of rural settlement

settlement to right, since they are only refinements of the existing planning system, but I believe that they do merit more detailed consideration from central and local government.

Finally, I would like to draw attention to the list of acknowledgements that appears before this Foreword. I cannot fully express my debt of gratitude to many of the individuals involved. I would also like to apologise to the numerous individuals and organisations who have in some way helped in this study but who could not be mentioned by name in the acknowledgements.

This thesis is presented, for convenience, in two volumes. The first includes Chapters One to Seven, and is concerned with the planning mechanism, the methodology of the case studies, and the categorisation of rural settlement. The second contains those chapters (Chapters Eight to Twelve) which are concerned with presenting the detailed results of the two case studies, and also the concluding chapter (Chapter Thirteen).

Volume I

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The aims of the research

The aim of this study is to achieve a better understanding of rural settlement planning in England, with particular interest being paid to policies of selected village development and the impact which these policies have had on rural settlements in two study areas.

During the twentieth century and particularly since the Second World War, there has been an unprecedented rate of change in the physical environment of rural settlement. This has been accompanied by profound changes in the social and economic structure of rural areas. These changes may be seen as the product of often long established processes. Since 1947 county planning authorities, and more recently district planning authorities, have exercised comprehensive planning powers which has enabled, through compulsory development control restrictions, the regulation of many aspects of physical changes in rural settlements. Local authorities have also formulated plans and policies which have provided a framework not only for control of physical development, but also to alleviate some of the planning problems associated with social and economic changes in rural settlement. This thesis is specifically concerned with an examination of the processes and procedures which have been developed for planning rural settlements in England. Our primary interest is the principle of selected village development which has

come to dominate rural settlement planning policies in this country.

We are concerned not only with the way in which planning policies operate, but also with an assessment of aspects of the impact of selected village development policies on rural settlement in the study areas. Given the urban bias in the current geographical distribution of the English population, and the geographical structure of local government, it is perhaps inevitable that research concerning planning policies has focussed on urban areas. In fact, although the modern planning system may be considered as commencing with the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947, as late as the early seventies there had been relatively little substantial research concerned specifically with the impact of planning policies on settlement in rural areas. This research study may be seen as an attempt to start to redress this balance. It is encouraging to note that since this project was started in 1973, other scholars have started major research projects concerning rural settlement planning policies.

This geographical study has four principal goals;

(a) To examine the theory of selected village development.

(b) To study the application of selected village development policies and the mechanisms of rural settlement planning.

(c) To examine the impact of selected village development policies on rural settlement (in two case study areas).

(d) To assess, within the limitation of the research methodology, the utility of selected village development policies.

The geographical structure of the study has three principal components. Firstly, Chapters Two, Three, Four and Five are concerned with a national perspective. Secondly, the more detailed consideration in Chapter Seven of 'Rural Settlement and Official Planning Categories' focuses on a sub-regional analysis of five selected areas: Huntingdonshire (now part of Cambridgeshire County Planning Authority); the Isle of Wight; Norfolk; Nottinghamshire; and West Sussex. The selection of these sub-regional study areas is explained in Chapter Seven. Finally, the research is also concerned with a local component, as represented by the two case study areas: South Nottinghamshire, an example of a 'pressure' rural area; and North Norfolk, which is an example of a lowland, 'remoter' rural area (Chapter Six discusses the reasons for selection of these particular areas).

The case studies are of critical importance to the value of this research. It was considered to be of particular importance to have two case study areas: one of a 'pressure' area and the other of a remoter rural area, to allow comparisons to be made of the very different situations in these areas, and correspondingly to make the conclusions of the research more representative.

1.2 Terminology

The subject matter of this thesis means that we immediately

encounter a number of problems of terminology which are most appropriately considered in this introductory chapter. The most fundamental of these is what we mean by 'rural', and we shall consider the background to other definitions of rural, and our own use of the term, in some detail in the subsequent section of this chapter.

In the English countryside we can identify four elementary forms of contemporary human settlement: dispersed settlement, hamlets, villages and urban settlement. For the distinction between different types of rural settlement we follow the classification established by Uhlig and Lienau¹. A settlement is one or more dwelling places with associated structures and open spaces excluding related fields. Groups of between three and fourteen dwellings are considered as hamlets, below this settlement is classified as dispersed in character. Nucleations of fifteen or more dwellings constitute villages.

The difference between villages and towns involves the fundamental problem of our distinction between urban and rural, so this is considered more appropriately in the later discussion.

We should also comment on the difference between enumeration districts, civil parishes, and districts, in rural areas. These are units of administration and not of physical settlement, although the first two units may coincide with the built up area of a given village and its related dispersed settlement outside the physical boundary of the settlement. The enumeration district is the basic geographical unit of administration in the national census. In rural areas this often co-incides with the civil parish area

(although where this contains a large village, the civil parish may consist of two or more enumeration districts). In this research the enumeration district is an important unit of statistical representation, but for the purposes of simplicity, where a single civil parish contains more than one enumeration district we have aggregated data to form a single, composite enumeration district.

The civil parish is the administrative sub-division of a rural district and may be popularly associated with individual villages or with the civil counterpart of the basic ecclesiastical unit. In practice, the civil parish relates not just to the village, but also to hamlets and dispersed settlement. Consequently, one civil parish may consist of several different rural settlements, particularly in the case of smaller villages and hamlets.

The administrative district is the sub-division of a county constituted by local government reorganisation in 1974. In some cases we also refer to the former administrative unit of the 'rural district' which was the rural sub-division of a county prior to the reorganisation associated with the Local Government Act of 1972 (and implemented on the 1st April, 1974).

1.3 The definition of 'rural'

Before the reorganisation of local government in England and Wales in 1974 there was an apparent distinction between 'rural' and 'urban' local government areas. However, it was generally accepted that the administrative division between Rural Districts and Urban Districts, County Boroughs and Municipal Boroughs, did

not represent a true division between rural and urban. This was due in part to the very considerable changes in the land use of specific areas, particularly those adjacent to large urban areas, that had occurred since the last major revision of the structure of local government in the nineteenth century. In addition, changes in the functions and fortunes of individual settlements over this period, particularly in respect of the rationalisation of the geographical pattern of rural and agricultural market centres, had meant that many centres with urban district status in the nineteenth century, were no longer distinctively urban by the second half of the twentieth century. The new system of local government introduced in 1974, overcame the problem of rural/urban definition by referring to the administrative level between county and parish simply as 'districts'. The labels 'urban' and 'rural' were dropped altogether. However, many of the new district authorities grouped both rural areas and large urban settlements in one local government unit. Ironically this has probably intensified the need in geographical and related research to define urban and rural.

Academic definition of the term rural has a long history and an extensive literature, which we can only partly consider here. It is important that we recognise that some definitions distinguish between rural areas, rural settlement, and rural population. Most of the works of definition and related studies would accept that not all settlements in a rural area are necessarily rural in character. Fewer works have implicitly stated that not all of the population in a given rural settlement could be referred to as rural, although Stevens² has established this point.

A general review of related literature indicates that definitions of 'rural' fall into five broad groups associated with the individual criteria used for definition.

1. Land-use: Possibly the most common basis for definition is land use criteria. For example, Cherry³ has defined rural areas, perhaps rather imprecisely, as "... where agriculture and forestry are the dominant forms of production". Wibberley has constructed a rather more detailed definition of rural, which is based on land use criteria:

"The word [rural] describes those parts of a country which shows unmistakable signs of being dominated by the immediate past. It is important to emphasise that these extensive uses might have been a domination over an area which has now gone, because this allows us to look at settlements which to the eye still appear to be rural but which, in practice, are merely an extension of the city resulting from the development of the commuter train and the private motor car." 4

2. Economic activity: Many definitions embrace the principle that a rural area or settlement is one in which a relatively large proportion of the population (which is usually defined by some threshold value) is directly or indirectly involved in economic activity associated with agriculture or forestry. Such definitions are related to the land use definitions but exhibit the important distinction that one is concerned with the activity or use of the land, and the other with the economic activity of the population. Stevens⁵ has summarised the basis of economic definitions as:

"It is generally implied in geographical analysis that rural population is that which is directly or at one remove only maintained by exploitation of the intrinsic resources of the land".

In fact, Stevens later rejects this basis for a definition in favour of one associated with population density, which is considered to be more conveniently expressed in simple numerical terms.

The terminology usually associated with definitions based on economic activity has been credited by Vince⁶ to Stamp⁷. In the Presidential address to the British Association in 1949 Stamp defined three forms of rural economic activity: 'primary'; 'secondary'; and 'adventitious', these have now entered common usage. From this Vince⁸ developed a definition of rural which takes the threshold value of primary employment as being a minimum of forty per cent of the workforce.

3. Social factors: Cherry⁹ has suggested that we might also use a social definition based on the identification of a rural way of life. However, as he acknowledges, the problems of precise definition are probably insurmountable since it is increasingly doubtful whether in Britain we could recognize a rural way of life as opposed to an urban one. Nonetheless, this basis for a definition is worth mentioning because it probably forms one of the key factors in the 'lay' perception of what is rural.

Associated with this is Pahl's¹⁰ contribution that for the purposes of social or behavioural research studies, we should rely on what the occupants of a given settlement perceive its status

(i.e. rural or urban) to be. This may be a workable basis of definition for individual community studies, although it presumes a concensus of opinion amongst the population which may not be apparent in practice.

4. Demographic factors: The application of demographic factors to definitions of the term rural can generally be split into those considering rural areas on the basis of population density, and those considering rural settlement, usually by reference to a maximum size limit.

The use of population densities is based on the observation that such densities are lower in rural areas and higher in urban. Bowley¹¹, in 1919, suggested a critical division between rural and urban of 189 persons per square mile. This is greater than Stevens¹² upper limit in his 'normal' rural range of population density of 80-130 persons per square mile, with an upper critical limit of 153.

Population size is also a common basis for definition. The Scott report¹³ suggests that a parish (as opposed to a single settlement) is rural if its total population is below 1,500. A later definition, by Saville in 1957, suggests a maximum parish size of only 500 people for rural status. Recent observations by the author suggests that consideration of size alone by reference to a single population threshold may be an unsuitable basis for definition, since it fails to account for very different local circumstances. This is illustrated by the situation in the two case study areas of this research project. In North Norfolk the

small local resort of Wells (Civil parish population 2,345) which was an urban district prior to local government reorganisation in 1974, is considered by residents of surrounding settlements and generally by Wells householders and organisations, to be a town. In contrast, in South Nottinghamshire the civil parishes of Radcliffe on Trent (7,702), Keyworth (approximately¹⁵ 8,100) and Ruddington (6,838), and other parishes with more than five thousand population, are considered to be villages and are referred to as such by their residents, local newspapers and local government.

We may consider that relatively large settlements such as these cannot be accurately referred to as villages proper. Their scale may be seen as closer to that of a small town, yet their location, function and morphology are usually more closely allied to that of a village, from which they have originally and often quite recently developed, than to an urban centre. Many other aspects of their character, such as recreational activities, and their planning problems, are also more associated with rural status. In addition, as we have seen, many of these settlements are considered to be villages by their residents. The peculiar situation of these large rural centres is reflected in the definition of rural followed by the Council for Small Industries in Rural Areas (CoSIRA) which is an official body of the Development Commission. CoSIRA has established a threshold population of 10,000 as delineating rural status.

5. Combined definitions: Given the unsuitability of some of the individual criteria defining what is rural, some observers have used definitions with two or more factors. Robertson, in 1961

illustrated the use of a combined definition of economic activity and place of residence¹⁶, to produce a four-fold classification of 'agricultural/rural', 'rural', 'rural-urban', and 'urban' areas. More recent work by Cloke¹⁷ has focussed on producing an index of rurality for England and Wales. This is essentially a development of the use of combined factors which by applying principle components analysis allows Cloke to use fifteen variables in the assessment process. This is a valuable development in the method of looking at rurality, and facilitates a quantitative comparison of the degree of rurality of different rural areas in England and Wales.

An important aspect in the consideration of rurality is the idea of the rural-urban continuum. This was introduced by Redfield¹⁸ as the folk-urban continuum, and subsequently developed by Queen and Carpenter¹⁹. This was a positive movement away from some of the early definitions which were constrained by seeing 'rural' and 'urban' as two poles of a dichotomy. Support for the concept of a rural-urban continuum came from many of the studies which attempted to define and examine the 'rural-urban fringe'. These studies were most widespread in the United States, although many of their findings are equally applicable to the situation in this country. Pryor²⁰ has produced an extensive bibliography of rural-urban fringe and related studies in the United States and elsewhere.

More recent work, however, suggests that the continuum model is an over-simplified and misleading representation of the real world (see, for example, Mitchell²¹). In this country Pahl's work²²,

for example, has suggested the almost infinite complexity of rural-urban relationships and this might have tended to discourage further academic consideration of definitions of rurality. It may be a reflection of this contemporary situation that planning studies have paid relatively little attention to the issue of definition, although this lack of concern is reinforced by the geographical structure of planning responsibility, which often merges rural and urban administrative areas (as earlier discussed) and by planning legislation which does not encourage separate consideration of rural and urban.

The way in which planners consider what is rural and what is not, is an integral part of this research study. This project is concerned with rural settlement planning, and as such we must examine all of those settlements which are involved in the process of planning rural settlement. Clearly if the study is to be comprehensive (within the constraints of the case study methodology) we cannot restrict our analysis to certain types of villages, hamlets and dispersed settlements which fall within an accepted definition of rural, since this would imply the exclusion from our study of other types of settlement in the countryside which fell outside our definition, but which were nonetheless a part of rural settlement planning policies. Consequently, our study must be concerned with those settlements which the planners consider to be rural (by merit of applying rural settlement planning policies to them) and not specifically with those settlements determined to be rural by an academic definition.

This statement of what may be seen as a rather pragmatic definition to be used in this study, does not obviate the need to explain what is our understanding of the term rural. It is not possible to be specific about this understanding, since there is no apparent consensus amongst planners themselves about the meaning of rural. In the authors' opinion this is largely a product of their different academic backgrounds and training processes at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, of the lack of concern in planning literature about serious definition, and also of the individual local environments in which they are working. In this study we have attempted an elementary synthesis of opinions by an examination of written policy statements, reviews, and special reports concerned with rural planning policy. The general view that emerges is that rural settlement is settlement within the countryside which is not considered to be urban in character or size. Unlike other definitions this does not use the term 'rural' as a description of the character of settlement (there is, for example, little concern for the economic context of some of the academic definitions), but simply as a label for non-urban settlement. The planners definition of rural therefore hinges on what is considered to be urban, and not vice-versa. This can roughly be described by a population threshold of 10,000 (which accords with the CoSIRA definition). We do not propose this as an absolute definition, since as the foregoing examination has shown this would be a far too simplistic assessment, but it does broadly describe the basis for planners understanding of rural, in the context of planning policy, in England. We should note that this does not apply to either Wales or Scotland (or to some areas of 'highland' England).

Wherever the term 'rural population' is used in this study it refers to all of the population of a given rural civil parish or settlement), or to a group of parishes or rural settlements, as relevant. Consequently, the term does not specifically refer to that sector of the population in the countryside which is engaged in primary or related secondary economic activities.

1.4 The principal objectives of the study

To achieve the goals set for this research, a number of specific objectives were defined. These can be roughly translated into the framework of chapters as indicated below:

- (a) To examine the development of planning legislation during the twentieth century (Chapter Two).
- (b) To examine the 'conceptual basis' of rural settlement planning, specifically selected village development (Chapter Three).
- (c) To analyse the mechanism of planning, i.e. the planning of rural settlement in practice (Chapter Four and Chapter Seven).
- (d) To assess the relationship between the geographical concept of central place theory and the planning principle of selected village development (Chapter Five).

(e) To examine changes in the distribution of the rural population of the case study areas during the twentieth century (Chapter Eight).

(f) To analyse the structure, and geographical mobility of the rural population of the study areas (Chapter Nine).

(g) To study the patterns of personal mobility in the case study areas (Chapter Ten).

(h) To examine the patterns of employment in the resident population of the study villages (Chapter Ten).

(i) To discover the distribution and consumer use of social and economic facilities in the case study areas (Chapter Eleven).

(j) To analyse the structure and social integration of the 'communities' in the study villages, and attitudes to development of the villages (Chapter Twelve).

To this framework of research objectives is added a further chapter which is concerned only with the methodology of the case studies (Chapter Six). Chapter Thirteen presents a summary of the findings of the research and an assessment of the significant findings, in the context of selected village development policies, leading to some specific recommendations.

1.5 The research method

The requirements of the study necessitated a variety of research approaches. The initial preparation for the study and subsequent detailed review of the various written statements of planning policy, required an extensive literature search. As already noted, up to the early seventies there had been little research concerned with the impact of planning policies on rural settlement in England. Nonetheless, it is apparent that there is a wide range of 'related' literature. The results of this literature search are summarised through the 'selected' bibliography attached to the thesis. A specialised aspect of this approach was the review of the provisions of planning and related legislation.

A second approach of the research was to provide a detailed knowledge of the planning mechanism as it specifically affects rural settlement planning. This was developed by a review of the current statutes, and relevant literature such as Department of the Environment (DoE) planning bulletins and circulars to local planning authorities. In addition, informal discussion with planning officers proved to be invaluable and formal liaison with selected local planning authorities was introduced at this stage of the research.

The five sub-regional studies required a further approach which may be referred to as 'field observation' as distinguished from the 'field studies' that were carried out only in the case study areas. The difference between these two approaches is essentially one of detail and depth of study.

Finally, in twelve 'study villages' within the two case study areas, an extensive questionnaire survey was carried out, in a variable sample of village households. This survey was designed to collect certain necessary unique data and also to assess the attitudes and opinions of a sample of village residents concerning a number of issues.

Further details of the methods of data collection and subsequent methods of analysis are contained in the relevant chapters and appendices.

1.6 Conventions followed in the text

In the text the individual sections within chapters are referred to in Arabic numerals. Consequently, a reference to, for example, section 3.1 is thus to the first section of the third chapter. The Appendices to the study do not follow this sequence but are structured as separate reports. The sequence of appendix numbers does not follow that of the chapter numbers, for example Appendix One does not relate to Chapter One. The Figures, Tables and Photographs are numbered in relation to their first appearance in the text. Consequently Figure 2.1 is the first new figure referred to in Chapter Two. Photographs are positioned near to their first reference in the text, whereas Tables, Figures and Footnotes are located at the end of each chapter. Source references, sequentially numbered, appear in the list of footnotes at the end of each chapter. A selected bibliography of many of these references and of additional literature consulted in the study, appears

at the end of the thesis as Appendix Eight. Maps follow the convention of being drawn with north towards the top of the page. Statistics from the computer analysis of the village surveys, in both the text and in the appropriate tables, are given to one decimal place. This does mean that small rounding off errors may be found in some of the tables. Finally all of the pages have been numbered in sequence.

FOOTNOTES

1. H.Uhlig and C.Leinau (Eds.) *International working group for geographical terminology of agricultural landscapes - Volume II: Rural settlements*. Geissen (1972).
2. A. Stevens, 'The distribution of the rural population in Great Britain', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 11 (1946), pp. 23 - 25.
3. G. Cherry, *Rural planning problems* (1976), p. 2.
4. G.P. Wibberley, *Rural activities and rural settlements: Paper presented to the Town and Country Planning Conference, London 16 - 17th February, 1972*.
5. A. Stevens, *op cit* (footnote 2), p. 23.
6. S.W.E. Vince, 'Reflections on the structure and distribution of rural population in England and Wales, 1921 - 1931', *Transaction of the Institute of British Geographers* 18 (1952), pp. 53 - 76.
7. L. Dudley Stamp, 'The planning of land use' Presidential address to the British Association (Section E) 1949; *The Advancement of Science* 6 (1949), pp. 224 - 233.
8. S.W.E. Vince, *op cit* (footnote 6).

9. G. Cherry, op cit (footnote 3).
10. R.E. Pahl, 'The social objectives of village planning' *Official Architecture and Planning* 29 (1966), pp. 1146 - 1150.
11. A.L. Bowley, 'Rural population density in England' *Statistical Journal* (1914).
12. A. Stevens, op cit (footnote 2).
13. HMSO, *Land utilisation in rural areas*. Report of the Committee (The Scott report) (1942), Cmnd. 6378.
14. J. Saville, *Rural depopulation in England and Wales, 1851 - 1951*. (1957).
15. Keyworth has expanded outside the boundaries of the Keyworth enumeration district. Consequently large parts of the settlement now lie within the enumeration districts of two adjacent villages. Because of this it is effectively impossible to obtain an accurate figure for the population of Keyworth from the census records. The figure given in the text is based on an estimate produced by the Rushcliffe District Planning Authority, and represents the total population of the settlement in 1975.
16. I.M.L. Robertson, 'The occupational structure and distribution of the rural population in England and Wales'. *Scottish Geographical Magazine* 77 (1961), pp. 165 - 179.

17. P.J. Cloke, 'An index of rurality for England and Wales' *Regional Studies* 11 (1977), pp. 31 - 46.
18. R. Redfield, *The folk culture of Yucatan*. (1941).
19. S.A. Queen and D.B. Carpenter, *The American city* (1953).
20. R.J. Pryor, 'Defining the rural-urban fringe' *Social Forces* 47 (1968).
21. G.F.C. Mitchell, *Rural-urban preferences with respect to agricultural policy objectives*. University of Bristol. Department of Economics Occasional Paper. (1973).
22. See for example:
R.J. Pahl, 'The rural-urban continuum' *Sociologia Ruralis* 6 (1966), pp. 299 - 329.

CHAPTER TWOTHE DEVELOPMENT OF PLANNINGLEGISLATION2.1 Introduction

Village planning in England is not exclusively a product of the twentieth century. New rural settlements which were often consciously planned plantations built under the direction of one person or a group of people, are a long recognised feature of the eighteenth and nineteenth century landscape. Such settlements may have a variety of origins.

During this period a number of estate villages were built, often associated with the population of an established village being transferred due to emparkment. Chippenham in Cambridgeshire is an example of one of the earliest estate villages to be created as a result of emparkment. Edward Russell began work in 1696 and the process seems to have been largely completed by 1712¹. Figure 2.1 shows the contemporary structure of the settlement. At least two other very early examples of such settlement have been identified as originating in the late seventeenth century. These are Sudbury in Derbyshire and the first stage of Great Trew in Oxfordshire. Similar villages are more commonly products of the eighteenth century and to a more limited extent also the nineteenth century.

A classic example of transfer due to emparkment is the village of Nuneham Courtenay in Oxfordshire. It has been suggested that the old

settlement enclosed by emparkment by Lord Harcourt and which the new village replaced, was the deserted village of Goldsmiths' famous poem of 1770. Milton Abbas in Dorset is a more famous example of village foundation through emparkment, which was created in 1786 by the first Earl of Dorchester. Edensor in Derbyshire provides an example of a settlement which went through two distinct phases of establishment. The first village was created by Capability Brown, as a result of emparkment of a pre-existing settlement, in 1761. This settlement itself was subsequently re-established in 1835 by Joseph Paxton who built a new estate village for the sixth Duke of Devonshire.

Plantations also owe their origins to commercial and industrial functions. William Madocs' creation of Tremadoc in Gwynedd was founded as a new commercial port for shipping locally quarried slate, in the early nineteenth century. Some of the early 'industrial' villages combined both industrial and agricultural functions, such as the village of Harewood in West Yorkshire which was built in the mid eighteenth century under the auspices of the first Earl of Harewood. Cromford in Derbyshire was designed by Richard Arkwright and based on a new mill on the River Trent in the late eighteenth century. Workers for the mill were moved out from Nottingham to populate the settlement.

In the nineteenth century some industrial plantations were designed to reflect new social principles of housing and community interaction. Saltaire in Yorkshire is the obvious example of such planning, built on a grid iron pattern and founded in 1850 with 560 houses. This was a remarkable experiment in industrial sociology which was to form the model for later plantations at Bourneville and Port Sunlight. New Lanark was a new village built in association with a mill near the Falls of

Clyde. This was a more bizarre attempt at an ideal community built under the inspiration of Robert Owen in 1784.

This discussion has so far focussed on the contribution of plantations to the historical pattern of rural settlement planning in this country, but we must also acknowledge the significance of planning or redesign of parts of settlements. The canals and railways were often important in stimulating the planned development and redesign of some rural settlements. Commercial End, part of the village of Swaffham Bulbeck in Cambridgeshire, provides an example of this stimulus and is shown in Figure 2.2. Nuneham Courtenay in Oxfordshire, mentioned earlier in the context of emparkment, was a model village sited on the Oxford to London turnpike in the 1760's.

Rowley² has noted that parliamentary enclosure was also an occasional stimulus to planned redesign of rural settlement in England, and he gives the example of Settrington in North Yorkshire, which was partially replanned following enclosure.

Recent research has also emphasised that planning of rural settlement may have been a far more extensive activity in the middle ages than had formerly been accepted. New discoveries and interpretations have challenged the established concept that the geographical pattern of English rural settlement owes its origins largely to the pre-Conquest distribution of villages. Rowley³ has suggested that the Anglo-Saxon settlement pattern may have been far more fragmented than was formerly acknowledged, and that a substantial amount of replanning and consolidation circa 1100 to 1300, together with extensive colonisation of the 'wastes' through new settlements, may have been a critical process in the evolution of the contemporary settlement pattern.

Probably the best archaeological reflections of these processes are at Wawne, Humberside, which was redesigned in the fourteenth century, and at Wharram Percy in North Yorkshire, where three distinct periods of replanning have been identified by excavation, between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries. There is also evidence that many northern villages were substantially replanned in the twelfth century following the devastation of the north of England by William I after the Conquest.

In other rural areas the motive for replanning may have been less dramatic, and it may reflect simple imitation of the planning of medieval new towns in some parts of the country. Elsewhere planned villages have been associated with military fortifications (for example, Porchester in Hampshire, and Kimboulton in Cambridgeshire) and also with monasteries. Thomas Sharps study⁴ of Blanchland in County Durham indicates a planned village on this site in front of the former Augustinian monastery (founded 1165 and dissolved 1539). The existing settlement is related to substantial replanning of the early site by the Earls of Crewe, who created a new village to house local lead miners.

The subject of rural settlement planning before the twentieth century, and perhaps particularly before the seventeenth century, deserves much more attention than we can justify here. However, we can establish that the long recognised planned villages of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, should not be seen in isolation but as continuing a tradition of regulated settlement that may have been relatively common in the middle ages.

We have established that village planning is certainly not a new phenomenon in the processes of development in the English village, but put into perspective it was not the rule before the imposition of the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947. In addition with the development of Town and Country Planning legislation, regulation has become both compulsory, and the responsibility of public bodies (the local planning authorities). In contrast the village planning of the historical tradition was not only not compulsory, but where it was carried out it was under the direction of a single person, or more occasionally a group of people (such as a monastic cell). Consequently the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947, which as we shall see was the first comprehensive and effective planning legislation to concern rural settlement development, was of monumental importance to the development of English villages. The process by which this 'watershed' Act became statute and by which subsequent planning legislation has developed, spans about a century of interest group activity, individual protest and related legislation

2.2 The origins of planning legislation

The genesis of British planning has been explored in considerable detail by Ashworth⁵ in 1954 and more recently by Cherry⁶ on the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of the Royal Town Planning Institute. These Studies show that modern planning stems essentially from the massive housing and other problems of English towns and cities in the nineteenth century, which encouraged statutory intervention through a variety of legislation on: working hours and conditions; housing; towns and streets; water supply; sewage; fuel; light; education; health and welfare. The extent of the urban problems has been shown by Ashworth and

on a more local scale by Briggs⁷. Generally the population of Britain increased from 8.9 million in 1801, to 32.5 million by the turn of the century. This population became increasingly concentrated into the towns and cities so that even by 1851 over half of the countries population lived in urban settlements. After allowing for natural growth this represented a massive migration from the countryside to the towns and cities. This population movement led to great social and economic problems in the villages, which have been more fully explored elsewhere, notably by Saville⁸, although unlike the urban situation this generated little Parliamentary interest in terms of legislation.

Consequently, modern compulsory planning stems from the nineteenth century urban orientated legislation and therefore, ironically, contemporary English village planning owes its origins to the nineteenth century problems of urban England. It is not surprising, therefore, that planning legislation up until the Act of 1947 was almost entirely urban orientated.

We can recognise five more or less distinct phases in the development of planning legislation in England. Three of these relate to the period before 1947, and two to the period after.

2.3 The first planning statutes, 1909-1931

The Housing and Town Planning Act, 1909, may be seen with hindsight as a concession to the strong social reform lobby, by the Liberal government of the period. This was the first legislation titled with the term 'planning', although as the title indicates, the Act had little influence on the development of rural settlements. Under the planning

section of this Act local authorities were encouraged to prepare schemes for housing development and to submit these for approval to the Local Government Board,

However, submission of schemes was not compulsory, and consequently the Local Government Board exercised little more than an advisory capacity to local authorities. In addition the preparation of schemes for submission was a costly process, requiring the recruitment of a professional staff. The local authorities as defined in the Act, were the numerous rural and Metropolitan District authorities, and the Urban Boroughs. In rural areas these authorities were unlikely to have the financial resources to be able to recruit the necessary staff, or the incentive to prepare planning schemes. Thus it is hardly surprising that very few rural local authorities did prepare such schemes.

The main effect of the Local Government Board on rural areas was essentially a negative influence. The Board commissioned the Tudor Walters report of 1918 into working class housing densities. This led to the adoption of minimum standards for local authority housing development which included a maximum recommended density of twelve houses per acre. Whilst this was a desirable development for the standards of working class housing in the country, it inevitably led to the consumption of much more of the countryside that surrounded the existing built up areas of settlements.

The Housing and Town Planning Act, 1919, sponsored by Dr. Addison, was of much more importance. Although this legislation was very similar in structure to its predecessor, it made the preparation of development schemes compulsory for all local authorities with more than twenty thousand residents. This was considerable progress for the urban areas, but had little obvious effect on their rural counterparts which rarely had populations above this threshold. Far more important, this Act

recognised the difficulty of individual authorities preparing costly planning reports and made it possible for authorities to join together for the preparation of a plan to cover their composite areas. The Act suggested that these be called Joint Town Planning Committees. This led the way for the formation of numerous such committees so that by 1944, 1,021 of the 1,441 local authorities were members of Joint Town Planning Committees, of which there were then 179 in the country. Many of these groups commissioned and subsequently published 'regional' planning schemes for their areas. Whilst these schemes had no statutory authority, they did make a considerable contribution to planning literature of the period. Many of these schemes were prepared for rural areas and these are considered in more detail in Appendix One.

The only other planning Act of this period was The Town Planning Act, 1925, the principal significance of which was that it was the first Act to be solely concerned with planning. Otherwise this was largely a consolidation of previous legislation.

Also in this period there were several housing Acts which were of considerable importance to rural settlements. These were the previously mentioned 'Addison Act' of 1919, the Housing (Financial Provisions) Act of 1924 and the Housing (Rural Workers) Act of 1926. Only the latter was specifically concerned with rural settlements, but the exchequer subsidies proposed by the other two, favoured village housing¹⁰. The 1926 Act was designed to increase the housing accommodation of the countryside by encouraging landlords to repair and improve existing buildings. Grants of up to two-thirds of the total cost of the work were given. This was among

the first legislation to be directed at solving the social and economic problems in villages, brought about by a century of rural-urban migration at an unprecedented rate, and by parliamentary neglect.

In this period there was considerable pressure on the government to introduce legislation to protect the countryside from sporadic development. In December, 1931, Thomas Sharp wrote in the preface to his book 'Town and Countryside' ¹¹:

"During the last ten years many hundreds of angry letters relating to the desecration of the countryside have appeared in various sections of the press. One or two angry books and pamphlets have also been written. It is a question which causes anger - at times of a despairing kind - to all who have any feeling for the beauty of rural England."

The number of people with "any feeling for the beauty of rural England" had increased tremendously since the beginning of the century. This was in part due to the revolution in personal mobility that train excursions and the internal combustion engine were bringing about. This allowed many more people from all sections of the increasingly urban population to spend their newly won leisure time in the countryside. The countryside was becoming thought of as an urban amenity. Many of the 'regional plans' that appeared in this period visualised the creation of 'rural reservations' as countryside parks to be protected from development and to be enjoyed by the urban population (considered at greater length in Chapter Three). The Ministry of Health's 'model clauses' for planning schemes ¹², published in 1928, encouraged the development of reservations, but there were few planning powers as we now know them, and as compensation would have to be paid to the landowners in such areas for loss of the development value of their land, few such

areas were created.

One of the most active of the pressure groups at this period was the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, established in 1926. Besides general pressure the Council sponsored special studies in Cornwall ¹³, Devon ¹⁴, the Isle of Wight ¹⁵ and Thameside ¹⁶. Consequently, by the end of the twenties there was considerable pressure for the incorporation of protectionist powers in planning legislation.

In the course of the Labour administration of 1929-31, Sir Edward Hilton Young attempted to introduce a Rural Amenities Bill in response to increasing pressure. This was to extend planning powers to the countryside. This was welcomed by both the protectionist and amenity lobbies but was, nonetheless, nearly abandoned in the overlap between Macdonald's administration and the subsequent National Government in March 1931. Pressure from the lobbies revived the proposed bill in the early months of the National administration but the bill was subsequently abandoned due to opposition from a standing committee of local authorities. Rural planning had to wait two more decades and for the pressure generated by a world war for effective planning legislation.

2.4 Pre-war legislation, 1932 - 1939

With the failure of Sir Edward Hilton Young's proposed bill there was considerable hope that the Town and Country Planning Act of 1932 would incorporate some special powers for planning in the rural areas. Abercrombie's and Kelly's *Cumbrian Regional Planning Scheme* ¹⁷, published a few months before the bill had its

final Parliamentary reading, lamented the state of rural planning at that time and looked forward to the powers proposed under the new Act. The Act when it appeared on the statute books failed to live up to such promise.

Broadly, the Act encouraged local authorities to prepare planning schemes, although this was not compulsory as it had been for many local authorities under the 1919 Act. A scheme was not operative until it had been laid before both Houses of Parliament. Whilst a scheme was being prepared or waiting Parliament approval, 'interim development control' was supposed to operate in an area. Under this a developer need not obtain permission for his development, but was liable to have this demolished if the building did not fit into the planning scheme when it became operative.

In practice, the powers of the Act were considerably reduced by Ministerial interpretations and provisions¹⁸, there were long delays in awaiting Parliamentary approval, and few local authorities used the more effective planning measures because of the burden of compensation. This burden fell even more heavily on the limited financial resources of the rural authorities. Consequently, despite the fact that this was the first Town and Country Planning Act, the legislation had little effect on controlling the mounting social and economic problems of the countryside and its inhabitants.

The protectionist lobby of the time increasingly focussed its attentions on the phenomenon of ribbon development that was becoming more and more common on the fringes of towns and villages, and in

the open countryside. There is no evidence that this was a conscious policy, the lobby consisted of too many different groups and interests to promote a single objective such as this. The most damning criticism of ribbon development was that by Thomas Sharp in the book *Town and Countryside*¹⁹, published in 1932. In response to this lobby, to public concern and to the ineffectiveness of the 1932 Act in dealing with this form of development, the Restriction of Ribbon Development Act became statute in 1935. In its passage through Parliament it had been subject to a large number of restrictive amendments and consequently was little more effective in controlling this element of *spoiling the countryside* than had been the 1932 Act.

At this stage it may be useful to review exactly what measures did exist as mechanism of rural planning shortly before the Second World War. Most of the legislation that had been introduced had indeed been rather ineffective but this was as much due to a lack of imagination, as of financial resources on the part of the local authority. In rural areas the two principal mechanisms were the limited powers of the Town and Country Planning Act of 1932, and Restriction of Ribbon Development Act, 1935, and the various 'regional planning schemes', where these existed. Although the latter were only advisory documents with no direct planning enforcement, they could be used as guidelines by the local authorities. The principal mechanisms of development control in these schemes were zoning schemes covering all the countryside. These had existed since the publication of one of the earliest regional schemes, in 1923²⁰ the Deeside scheme²¹. In the early schemes there were usually there zones in rural areas. The rural and residential zones were areas where development should be allowed, whilst the agricultural zone restric-

ted development to agricultural buildings only. Rural zoning is considered in more detail in Chapter Three.

These very limited powers did little to control development in the countryside. On the 10th February, 1937, the House of Commons passed the following motion:

"That this house deplores the destruction of beauty in town and country and the danger to houses of historic or architectural interest, declares that these are matters of national concern, and is of the opinion that the government should take active steps to ascertain whether its existing powers are adequate or whether they require substantial reinforcement."

At the time the Ministry of Health, which was responsible for town and country planning, seems to have taken this as a declaration by the House of a lack of faith in the existing planning powers. In consequence the Town and Country Planning Advisory Committee established in 1934 by the then Minister of Health, Sir Edward Hilton Young, was asked by the new Minister, the Rt. Hon. Walter Elliot, to investigate the implied criticisms. In 1938 the committee submitted their 'Report on the preservation of the countryside'²². Broadly this report declared its faith in the existing legislation under the Town and Country Planning Act of 1932, and the Restriction of Ribbon Development Act of 1935, but admitted to grave misgivings about the administration of the powers by the local authorities. The committee recognised that the major faults of the system were:

- (a) It was not compulsory for local authorities to develop planning schemes.

(b) There were long Parliamentary delays in schemes being approved by both the House of Commons and the House of Lords.

(c) That local authorities were reluctant to take any positive planning measures because compensation was payable to landowners, in respect of loss of development value of their land in the case of many rejected planning applications, and where development restrictions were imposed on 'rural reservations'.

Outside government there was similar dismay at the inability of local authorities to implement the powers given to them under the 1932 Act. For example, in 1940 Geoffrey Boumphrey²³ published a comment on the inadequacy with which local authorities had dealt with suburban consumption of villages and the countryside after the 1932 Act:

"No urban local authority has the knowledge or the wish to discriminate in what land is built over. And so for the past quarter of a century England has been losing her richest soil at the rate of 35,000 acres a year to the towns. In the year 1938-39 the loss was no less than 97,000 acres". (p.27)

By the end of the 'thirties there was considerable dissatisfaction with the state of planning in the countryside. It is only fair to add that most of the critics of the system thought that the salient problem of rural development could be solved within the context of the Acts of 1932 and 1935.

2.5 Progress during the Second World War, 1940 - 1946

The years of the Second World War and the months immediately following its end in Europe, constituted a period of dramatic progress in the development of planning legislation. The period saw the publication of three key reports, the acceptance of three Parliamentary bills, all of which would have met with a stormy reception in the pre-war administration, and culminated in the publication in 1944 of the White Paper which led the way for the foundation of the momentous Town and Country Planning Act of 1947.

Between 1940 and 1942 there was a remarkable trio of papers presented to Parliament, the Barlow, Uthwatt and Scott reports. In the context of rural settlement planning we need not give a full review of these, but mention must be made of the more significant aspects.

The Royal Commission on the Distribution of the Industrial Population²⁴ was constituted in July 1937 under the chairmanship of Sir Montague Barlow. The report was presented to Parliament in January, 1940. The report had little direct relevance to the planning of rural settlement but it did recommend that a Central Planning Authority which was to be 'national in scope and character' should be established. This had considerable implications for the subsequent development of planning legislation covering both rural and urban areas.

The Expert Committee on Compensation and Betterment, appointed in 1941 under the chairmanship of Mr. Justice Uthwatt, was optimistically conceived (along with the Scott Committee) as a commission

to investigate a probable problem of post-war reconstruction. The title of the committee reflects that, it was this issue of compensation that was probably the strongest disincentive to effective planning under the 1932 Act. This was of great importance to rural planning because it was the small rural authorities who could least of all afford to pay compensation to landowners, through the adoption of a rural planning scheme. The final report of the committee presented in 1942²⁵ recommended that the rights of development in all land outside built up areas should be vested in the state. This would effectively mean that compensation for loss of the development value of the land, should not be paid to the landowners because they would no longer own the development rights of their land.

The committee for Land Utilisation in Rural Areas was appointed in October 1941 with Lord Justice Scott as its chairman²⁶. The terms of reference were: 'To consider the conditions which should govern building and other constructional development in country areas consistent with the maintainance of agriculture, and in particular the factors affecting the location of industry, having regard to economic operation, part-time and seasonal employment, the well being of rural communities and the preservation of rural amenities'. The report was presented in August, 1942, with recommendations as wide as the terms of reference might imply. In retrospect we can see that the breadth of the report and its essential lack of focus seems to have reduced its potential value. Generally, the report suggested that the well being of rural communities and the preservation of rural amenities would be secured by the maintenance of a prosperous agriculture. To achieve this it was recommended that industrial enterprises should be confined to the country towns and that all other development should be strictly

controlled in relation to the needs of agriculture. With hindsight we can see that the minority report by Professor Dennison, which pointed out the error of the basic assumption of the majority report, was a more valuable assessment. Nevertheless, the Scott report did make an important contribution to the development of planning in rural areas, particularly with its criticism of planning under the 1932 Act, its recommendations relating to national parks and countryside access, and its implied need for a Central Planning Authority.

Shortly after the publication of these reports, three important pieces of legislation received the Royal Assent. The first of these was the Minister of Town and Country Planning Act, 1943, promoted originally by Sir John Reith. This gave effect to the proposals for a Central Planning Authority contained in the Barlow, Uthwatt, and Scott reports.

The Town and Country Planning (Interim Development) Act, 1943, extended planning powers to all land not covered by local authority planning schemes or by an intention to prepare one. This was of particular value to rural areas as most of this 'unschemed land' was rural in character.

The Town and Country Planning Act of 1944 was of little direct relevance to rural areas. This gave local authorities new powers to deal with reconstruction and planning. As such this was of greatest benefit to urban areas where the legislation represented the first steps towards comprehensive urban planning. This Act, however, did have important implications for the subsequent legislation of 1947 which did have a dramatic effect on the extension of real planning powers to the villages and the countryside.

In June, 1944, an important White Paper ²⁷ was published and this completed the picture of the governments' intentions for planning in the immediate future. The 'Control of Land Use' developed the principle, fundamental to modern urban and rural planning, that right development could only be secured and wrong development prevented, if there was complete control in changes of the use to which land may be put. The requirement to obtain consent to develop land was seen as essential to a reorganised planning system. Cherry ²⁸ considers that this was a watershed in planning thought. Certainly this paper established the bones of the post-war planning legislation.

An additional development in this remarkable period of planning history was the New Towns Act of 1946. Although the legislation had not direct relevance to rural settlement planning, it is significant to this discussion as an early example of 'positive' as opposed to regulatory, planning legislation.

The need for post-war reconstruction and redevelopment of the areas of 'blitz and blight' can be seen to have generated a period of rapid progress in planning legislation. To a large extent this was due to the three reports and the White Paper that we have briefly reviewed, but in addition it would be difficult to overestimate the Parliamentary contribution of Sir John Reith (see footnote 29). Lord Reith's contribution is more fully investigated by Professor Cullingworth ³⁰ but Reith's auto-biography *Into the Wind* clearly shows his foresight in the planning context during the war years ³¹.

There was also considerable pressure for change outside Parliament. In the context of rural planning legislation one of the

most notable sources of criticism of the pre-war situation and advocacy of a new approach, was the study of a small rural area in the Midlands by the Agricultural Economic Research Institute under the direction of Dr. Orwin. The report of the survey ³² was published in 1944 as an experimental form of rural planning survey. Orwin's *Problems of the Countryside*, published in 1946 ³³ was largely based on the findings of this survey. In particular Orwin stressed the need for concise planning of industrial decentralisation to rural areas, and for rigorous planning of housing and development in the villages ³⁴.

2.6 The birth of compulsory rural planning, 1947 - 1967

This period starts with the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947, which was the first statute, after four decades of planning legislation, to extend compulsory planning powers to all rural areas. The Act was a watershed in the history of rural settlement planning. Progress in the rest of the period, before the foundation of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1968, was very slow compared to the seven years that preceded the 1947 Act.

The detailed structure of the 1947 Act does not concern us here but a brief look at its fundamental provisions is helpful. In the context of rural settlement planning there were five important contributions by this Act:

- (a) All land was brought under development control.

(b) Almost all forms of development were brought under control by making them subject to planning permission on the basis of the recommendations of the 1944 White Paper on *The Control of Land Use*.

(c) Development plans were to be prepared for every area in the country. For most rural areas these were to be the county development plans. These are considered in some detail in Chapter Four.

(d) Planning powers were transferred from the district authorities to county councils.

(e) Development rights in land and the associated development values were nationalised.

Most important of these was that all land was brought under development control. As we have seen, previous legislation had allowed development in large areas of the countryside to go largely uncontrolled. As late as 1942, twenty-three per cent of the land in England was not subject to 'interim development control', most of this being in the countryside. Further, only five per cent of English land was actually the subject of operative planning schemes ³⁵.

The transfer of planning powers from district to county authorities was recommended by the Scott report (section 233b). This was of great importance to rural settlement planning because the county authorities were more able to afford the services of specialised planning staff ³⁶, and to execute compulsory but expensive planning

surveys, than the district authorities in rural areas whose budgets were usually very small.

Nationalisation of the development rights for all land stemmed from the study of compensation and betterment by the Uthwatt committee. This move, although it was later the subject of modification as a controversial political issue, at last abolished the 'compensation bogey' that had so restricted positive planning in rural areas under the 1932 Act.

The Act of 1947 was a major step forward for rural areas. Chapter Four reviews briefly the way in which the legislation was actually operated.

The only other major piece of legislation in this period was the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949. In relation to rural amenity this Act was as fundamental as the 1947 Act was for rural settlement planning. But the Act also had some significance for rural settlement planning generally. Through the operation of the 1949 legislation, settlements within the boundaries of those National Parks which were subsequently established, became extreme examples of the impact of 'protectionist' policies on small rural communities. Further development in these villages was the subject of the strictest controls and consequently the physical form of many of these settlements has changed little since the respective Parks were established.

The 1949 Act had its origins in the Addison report of 1931³⁷. This was established to look into the concept of National Parks as suggested by the American models. A system of National Parks was

recommended by the committee but no government action was taken.

This was a considerable disappointment to the various groups interested in rural amenity and in consequence the Council for the Preservation of Rural England established a Standing Conference on National Parks which became an influential lobby³⁸ on the government. Eventually the government established a second committee chaired by Sir Arthur Hobhouse. This reported in 1947³⁹ and recommended the establishment of twelve National Parks and fifty-two additional conservation areas, all to be controlled by a National Parks Commission. The structure of the 1949 Act was based on these recommendations. A National Parks Commission was established and by 1957 there were ten National Parks in the country.

The Town and Country Planning Acts of 1953, 1954 and 1959 did little to change the system of planning in rural areas as established by the 1947 Act. The three Acts of the 'fifties were all the consequence of political controversy over the nationalisation of development rights and values in the Act of 1947 passed under a Labour administration. The passage of the Act through Parliament seems to have been marked by Conservative opposition to this section of the Act. Consequently, with a change of government in 1951 there was renewed pressure from within the Conservative Party to repeal this controversial section. The Act of 1953 did just that and the Act of 1954 established new and complex compensation principles. However, not only were the new provisions complex; they were also found to be unfair. Pressure from public opinion resulted in the 1959 Act which established more acceptable principles. Cullingworth reviews these changes and the financial principles involved in some detail⁴⁰, but these finer points do not concern us here.

During the 'fifties and early 'sixties there was growing concern over the success of the 1947 Act, despite its subsequent amendments. Some of these were sectional criticisms, such as the study by Willmott and Young ⁴¹ which expressed concern over the social consequences of planning on communities from the East End of London. Ian Nairn bitterly criticised the architectural record of the Act in the 'Outrage' issue of the *Architectural Review*, and subsequently published by the Architectural Press ⁴².

In the context of rural settlement planning there were several criticisms, for example, Weller ⁴³, and Turton ⁴⁴, the most notable being Lionel Brett's study of villages in South Oxfordshire ⁴⁵. Several local authorities also published reports which contained criticisms of the planning legislation. Among the most notable of these was a series of reports from Lincolnshire ⁴⁶ which emphasised the inadequacy of the 'county development plan' system in dealing with the planning of rural settlement.

Whilst the criticism of the county development plan as an ineffective tool was generally accurate (see Chapter Four for details of the operation of this system), such comments were part of a more widespread dissatisfaction with the system of planning as established under the 1947 Act. This stemmed from the narrow philosophical basis of the 1947 legislation and its apparent inflexibility when faced with changing circumstances. Before the late 'fifties, planning was largely thought of as the harmonisation and control of those physical forces which shaped land use and design. Many of the sectional criticisms were critical of this limited land and development orientation of planning, pointing out that the

established system failed to take account of social, environmental, or amenity issues.

This growing dissatisfaction of the late 'fifties and the early 'sixties should be kept in perspective. The 1947 Act had established a system of forward planning and development control which had doubtless saved vast areas of the countryside and numerous villages from being spoilt by development that would otherwise have been largely unregulated. However, new problems and situations emerged ⁴⁷ which the legislation of the 'forties, itself mostly designed to meet the problems of the 'thirties, failed to tackle effectively. Consequently, deficiencies in the legislation became obvious and the subsequent Town and Country Planning Act of 1968 can be seen as an improving measure, and not as legislation founding another system of planning.

2.7 Recent developments in planning legislation

Criticism of the legislation of the 'forties was largely a consequence of the deficiencies of the forward planning system and notably of the plan making process. In 1964 Richard Crossman, Minister of Housing and Local Government, established the Planning Advisory Group, to review 'Development Plan preparation and plan making generally'. Their report, *The Future of Development Plans* ⁴⁸, was published in 1965. The Group recommended that the plan making process should become more flexible and that a new system of plan types should be implemented. The White Paper ⁴⁹ of June, 1967, followed these recommendations. It was clear, however, that a new planning act would be needed to implement these proposals.

The 1968 Town and Country Planning Act instituted a new plan system based on 'Structure Plans', 'Local Plans' and 'Action Area Plans' (explained in Chapter Four). Unlike the 1947 Act which required local authorities to submit all plans to the Minister for approval, this legislation allowed a significant degree of decentralisation of decision making. Structure Plans had to be approved by the Minister, but neither Local Plans nor Action Area Plans had to be submitted.

The Countryside Act of 1968 was also largely the result of dissatisfaction with earlier legislation, in this case the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949. The new Act did little to change 'protectionist' attitude to the development of villages within the National Park boundaries, but it did reflect the increased decentralisation of decision making in planning matters. The Countryside Commission which replaced the National Parks Commission encouraged executive action by local authorities to establish 'Country Parks' and 'Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty'.

The other major development in planning in recent years was instituted by the re-organisation of local government under the Local Government Act, 1972. Re-organisation was promoted by the Redcliffe Maud report ⁵⁰ in 1969. Under the Act the new district authorities exercised considerable planning powers in relation to development control and local plan formulation, whilst the county authority retained responsibility for major planning issues and for the development of the structure plan. This represented a considerable devolution of power to the districts, as previously the county authorities controlled all forward planning within their areas.

There have been two further planning Acts in the recent period. The first was the Town and Country Planning Act of 1971. This is the statute for all planning functions at the present time. This embodies the 1968 Act with the addition of a variety of other legislation relating to planning law. As such it is a consolidating Act, like the statutes of 1925, which we have already discussed, and 1962 (which consolidated the 1947 Act with the later financial modifications of the 1953, 1954, and 1959 Acts) and, in the context of rural settlement planning it retains the same structure as the 1968 legislation.

The Town and Country Planning (Amendment) Act, 1972, contains provision for local authorities to submit joint structure plans. This could be of considerable value to those rural authorities with very limited financial resources, who would otherwise have great difficulty in affording a structure planning team of their own (although at the time of writing few rural authorities have used this provision).

We have noted earlier that changes in planning law during and since 1968 are best seen as improvements to the system established by legislation in the 'forties, and not as a dramatic revision of planning law, as the 'forties legislation was to the 1932 Act. Viewed from the standpoint of rural settlement planning these improvements seem to involve three processes:

(a) Decentralisation of decision making: Under the 1947 Act planning powers were vested in the county authorities. Some powers could be delegated to the district authorities but in practice their authority in relation to policy and forward

planning was very restricted. In addition, the powers of the county authorities were limited by strong central government controls. The 1968 and subsequent legislation brought about a downward transition of planning power. The central government⁵¹ delegated some authority to the counties by allowing the respective county councils to approve their own Local and Action Area Plans. Districts in turn became decision making bodies in relation to local planning. This represents a partial return to the structure of planning decisions before the legislation of the 'forties, whereby most power was vested in the district authorities. This issue of decentralisation of planning powers is examined in more detail in Chapter Four.

(b) Flexibility in the planning process. One of the post-1947 criticisms of planning was its inflexibility in relation to changing local and national circumstances. The structure planning process promises to be a great improvement. Since the structure plan is subject to continuous revision, in contrast the 1947 Act required the County Development Plan to be revised only once in every five years, although in practice the review period was often much longer.

(c) Public participation in the planning process. The Skeffington Report, *People and Planning*⁵² was requested in March, 1968, and published in July, 1969. This recommended that the public should be drawn into the plan making process, a proposal which has been taken up by all local authorities as 'public participation' although with varying degrees of enthusiasm. It is now a requirement for the approval of structure plans that the Secretary of State should be satisfied that

adequate public participation has been involved. Local Plans too must be given an adequate 'public airing' by the local authority before they are submitted to the council for approval. The system of public participation in most areas lacks refinement and encounters the problem of public apathy (as discussed in Chapter Four), but it is nonetheless a major step forward in the planning process.

The modern planning system is consequently made up of a complex body of planning and related legislation. Whilst the planning statutes prior to 1971 have been largely repealed, there are many cases, where sections of these and associated Acts remain on the statute books. In addition the interpretation and operation of the legal provisions is subject to a variety of Departmental and Ministerial circulars. This complexity is more appropriately considered in Chapter Four, which is concerned with the mechanisms of the planning process. Attention is drawn in particular to Table 4.1 which lists those Acts which are, at the time of writing, significant to the planning process in England and Wales.

2.8 Summary

Planning villages is not a new process. Indeed a rethinking of established ideas of settlement origin, backed up by some archaeological evidence, suggests that the rural settlement mosaic in this country owes more to village planning and regulation than had formerly been acknowledged. Nonetheless, the modern period of rural settlement planning, dating essentially from the Town and Country Planning Acts of 1947, differs fundamentally from regulation in the middle ages and in subsequent centuries in two critical aspects.

The first is an issue of scale, because since 1947 all development in any rural settlement in this country has been the subject of planning legislation. Secondly the instruments of decision making in the planning process are now the public authorities, operating within the confines of a complex body of planning legislation and within the context of clearly defined policies and plans. This Chapter is concerned with the evolution in the twentieth century of the modern planning system.

The development of planning legislation concerning rural settlement planning cannot be considered independently of the early town planning statutes. The origins of modern planning Acts can be traced to the widespread socio-economic and structural problems of nineteenth century urban England, which generated considerable Parliamentary concern and subsequent legislation, culminating in the first official planning Act, the Housing and Town Planning Act of 1909.

This chapter examines in detail the subsequent development of planning and related legislation leading up to the modern system. This is summarised in Figure 2.3. In this complex development the period of the Second World War appears of critical importance in terms of Parliamentary processes leading up to the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947, which can be seen as a watershed in the history of planning legislation. This Act was the first to institute effective planning powers covering all rural settlements.

The subsequent refinement of the system and its modification through the Acts of 1968 and 1971 is also examined.

FOOTNOTES

1. G. Darley, *Villages of vision* (1975) p. 3.

For more detail on the village of Chippenham, Spufford has produced a particularly detailed account of the emparkment of the old settlement and transfer to the new site outside the gates of Edward Russell's (later Lord Orford) mansion:

A. Spufford, *A Cambridgeshire community from settlement to enclosure*. Leicester University Department of English Local History, Occasional Paper 20, (1965).

2. T. Rowley, *Villages in the Landscape* (1976).
3. T. Rowley, *op cit.* (footnote 2).
4. T. Sharp, *Town and Countryside. Some aspects of urban and rural development* (1932) pp. 51 - 53.
5. W. Ashworth, *The genesis of modern British town planning* (1954).
6. G. Cherry, *The evolution of British town planning* (1974).
7. A. Briggs, *Victorian cities* (1964).
8. J. Saville, *Rural depopulation in England and Wales, 1851-1951* (1957).
9. HMSO, *Report of the committee on questions of building construction in connection with the provision of dwellings for the working classes* (1918), Cmd. 9191.

10. The Housing Act of 1919 allowed the Treasury to give support to local authorities whose schemes executed under the Act lost money above a certain level. This threshold was thought to be more favourable to rural authorities. The Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1924, differentiated between houses for agricultural workers and for general occupation, by allowing larger grants from the exchequer for the former.
11. T. Sharp, *op cit.* (footnote 4), see preface.
12. HMSO, *Town and country planning*. Model clauses for use in the preparation of schemes. Ministry of Health (1928).
13. W.H. Thompson, *Cornwall, a survey of its coast, moors and valleys with suggestions for the preservation of Amenities* (1930).
14. W.H. Thompson, *Devon, a survey of its coast, moors and valleys with some suggestions for their preservation* (1932).
15. Isle of Wight Planning and Development Committee and the Council for the Preservation of rural England, *Planning for the future development of the Isle of Wight* (1938).
16. Earl of Mayo, S.D. Adshead, P. Abercrombie, *The Thames from Cricklade to Staines* (1928).
17. Sir P. Abercrombie, S.A. Kelly, *Cumbrian regional planning scheme* (1932).

18. G. Cherry, op cit, (footnote 6), p. 68.
19. T. Sharp, op cit, (footnote 4), pp . 44 - 48.
20. A handful of regional planning schemes preceded the Deeside plan, but there were related to urban areas and contained no rural zoning schemes.
21. P. Abercrombie, S.A. Kelly, T. Fyfe, *The Deeside regional planning scheme: Chester and Flintshire* (1932).
22. HMSO, *Report on the preservation of the countryside*, Town and country planning advisory committee of the Ministry of Health (1939).
23. G. Boumphrey, *Town and country tomorrow* (1940).
24. HMSO, *Distribution of industrial population*. Report of the Royal Commission (1940). Cmd. 6153.
25. HMSO, *Report of the expert committee on compensation and betterment* (1942). Cmd. 6386.
26. HMSO, *Land utilisation in rural areas*. Report of the committee (1943). Cmd. 6378.
27. HMSO, *Control of land use*. White paper (1944). Cmd. 6537.
28. G. Cherry, op cit. (footnote 6), p. 125.

29. Sir John (later Lord) Reith became Minister of Works and Building in September 1940. Cherry has commented that he unleashed a new dynamism and enthusiasm for planning within the coalition government. The Scott and Uthwatt reports were set up at his behest and the 1943 Minister of Town and Country Planning Act seems to have been originally promoted by him:

30. J.B. Cullingworth, *Town and country planning in Britain* (1964). pp. 38 - 39.

31. Lord Reith, *Into the Wind* (1949).

32. Agricultural Economics Research Institute, *Country planning. A study of rural problems* (1944).

33. C.S. Orwin, *Problems of the countryside* (1946).

34. C.S. Orwin, *op cit* (footnote 33), pp. 68 - 69.

35. J.B. Cullingworth, *op cit*. (footnote 30), p. 32.

36. Formal training in planning began with the establishment of post-graduate planning courses at University College, London and courses at Manchester and Liverpool Universities. Training was given added impetus shortly afterwards when the Town Planning Institute drew up a professional examination syllabus in December, 1916. Nevertheless by 1947, planners who had either undergone a professional course of training, or who had passed the Institute's examinations were few and far between. Most local authority posts

were filled by surveyors, civil engineers or architects. These were nonetheless professional people and as such demanded a relatively high salary.

37. HMSO, *Report of the National Parks committee* (1931), Cmd. 3851.
38. G. Cherry, *op cit.* (footnote 6), p. 94 and p. 145.
39. HMSO, *Report of the National Parks committee (England and Wales)* (1947). Cmd. 7121.
40. J.B. Cullingworth, *op cit.* (footnote 30), pp. 149 - 155.
41. M. Young, P. Willmott, *Family and Kinship in East London* (1957).
42. I. Nairn, *Outrage* (1955).
43. J. Weller, *Modern agriculture and rural planning* (1967) pp.33-75.
44. R. Turton, 'Towards a rural planning policy', *Journal of the Town Planning Institute* 50 (1964) pp. 142-144.
45. L. Brett, *Landscape in distress* (1965).
46. Kesteven County Council, *North Kesteven Rural District rural development policy*, (1966), also,
 Lindsey County Council, *South East Lindsey study* (1967), and,
 Lindsey County Council, *Report of the survey and first review for North Lindsey* (1965).

47. In the countryside this was manifested by the revolution in standards of personal mobility, brought about by a dramatic increase in the rates of car ownership.

48. HMSO, *The future of Development Plans*. Report of the Planning Advisory Group for the Ministry of Housing and Local Government. (1965).

49. HMSO, *Town and country planning*. White Paper (1967). Cmd. 3333.

50. HMSO, *Royal commission on local government in England* (1969) Vol. 1. Cmd. 4040.

51. This is not to suggest that central government has relinquished most of its power in county and district planning matters, In fact, the central government is still a very important agency in modern planning. There are four main mechanisms of central government involvement in planning (also discussed in Chapter Four):

(a) All structure plans are approved by the Secretary of State at the Department of the Environment.

(b) All planning appeals are decided by inspectors of the DoE.

(c) The Secretary of State has the power to 'call in' any development application in which an important question of principle or the public interest is involved. After an inquiry the DoE then takes the application out of the hands of the relevant local authority. The Secretary of State can

similarly call in any Local Plan.

(d) The DoE influences 'local' planning policy by issuing occasional circulars to the planning authorities. These might involve any planning topic although they are frequently concerned with housing issues alone. The local authority is obliged to conform to these circulars. If they do not then any decision they make is liable to be reversed should it become the subject of a planning appeal.

52. HMSO, *People and planning*. Committee on public participation in planning (1969).

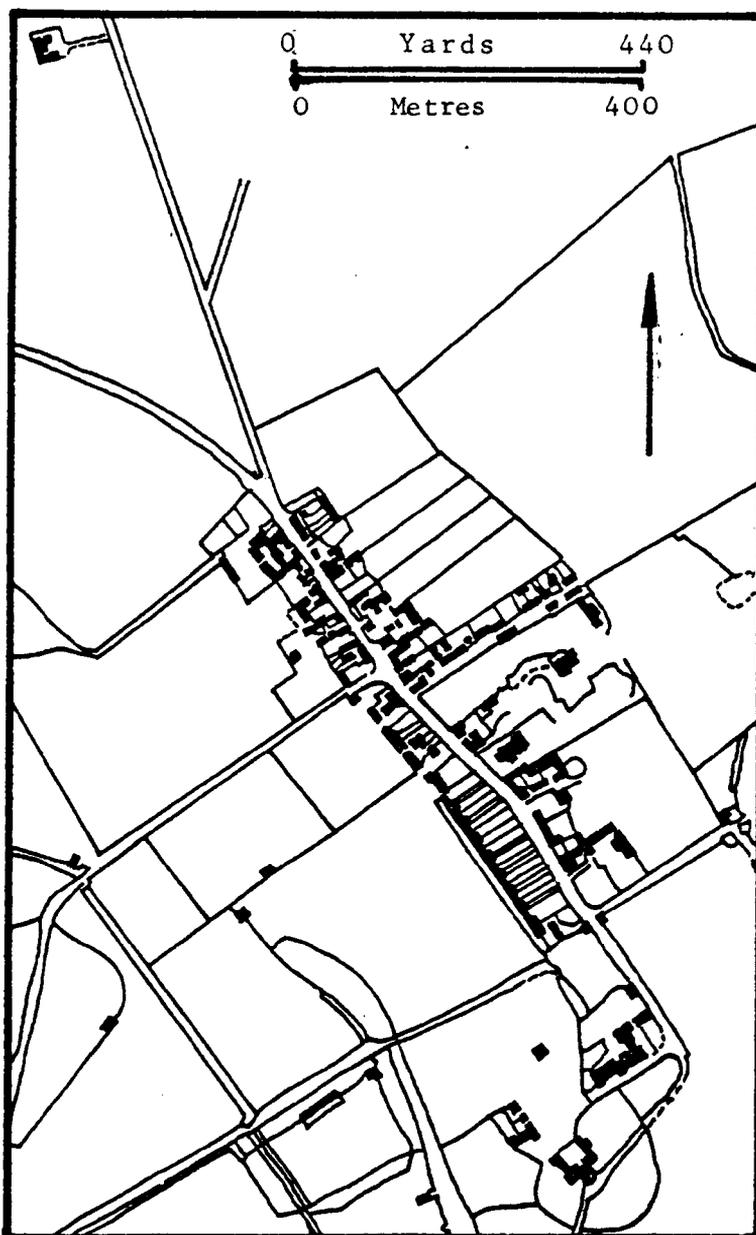


Figure 2.1 : Chippenham, Cambridgeshire

An early example of a simple estate village built at the gates of Edward Russell's mansion about 1700. The village was developed as a result of emparkement of the site of the original settlement. By 1712, about sixteen years after emparkement had started, the new village, as shown above, consisted of about fifty houses, church, and charity school.

Source : A. Spufford, *A Cambridgeshire community from settlement to enclosure*. Leicester University Department of English Local History. Occasional Paper 20 (1965).

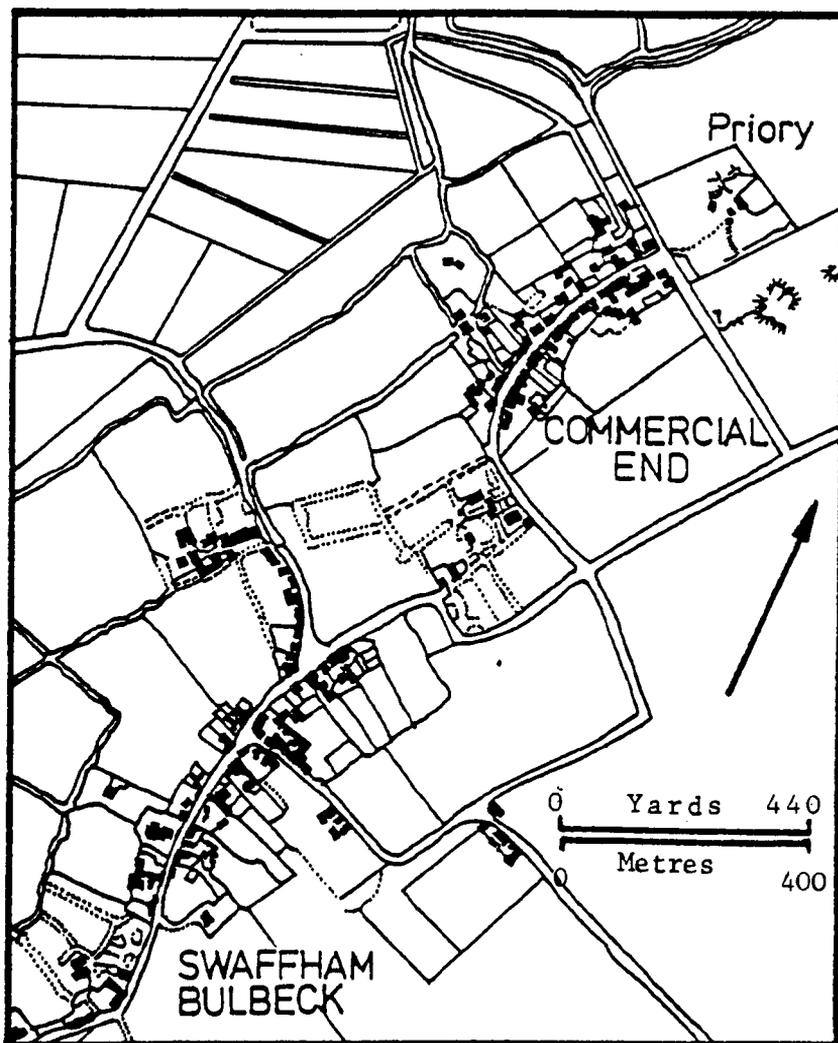
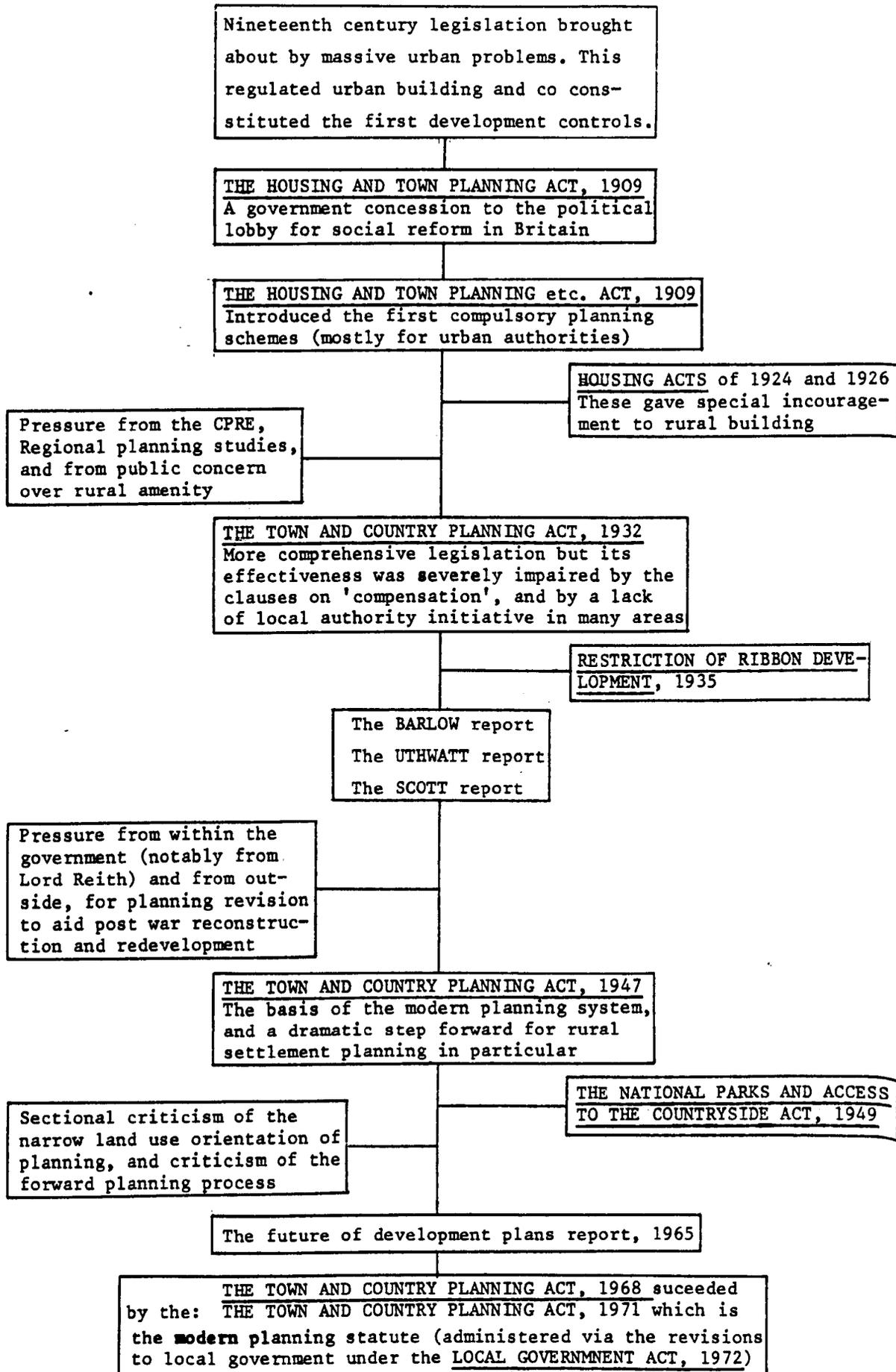


Figure 2.2 : Swaffham Bulbeck, Cambridgeshire

The plan shows some shrinkage particularly near the centre of the old village, and the development of a virtually new settlement outside the gates of the former priory. This is called Commercial End, and it forms the larger part of the hamlet of Newnham, which was established as a small canal port, dating from the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Source : T.Rowley, *Villages in the landscape* (1976).

Figure 2.3 The development of modern planning legislation



CHAPTER 3THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPTUAL
BASIS OF RURAL SETTLEMENT PLANNING3.1 Introduction

The concept of the city region shows clearly the interaction and interdependence of town and countryside. In such a situation it is not desirable that rural settlements should be planned independently of the towns and cities. Fortunately, it has now become one of the fundamental principles of British planning philosophy that town and country should be planned as one entity, and most modern planning legislation and policy formulation has taken this into account.

Consideration of the allied urban and regional planning perspectives has often tended to work against the interest of rural settlement planning. Imagination and, most important of all, finance have, as we noted in the introduction to this thesis, tended to be directed towards the problems of regional and urban planning. Investment in research concerning the urban transport problem, for example, is very high. This should not be blindly criticised because the urban transport situation and similar problems rank highly in the structural problems of contemporary society. In addition, this urban and, to a more limited extent, regional emphasis is probably inevitable when one considers the relative political influence of town and country. Nonetheless, this bias has tended to distract attention away from many of the problems of rural society in

England. In this context it is hardly surprising that the philosophy of rural settlement planning, the conceptual basis, is rather stunted.

The philosophy for the planning of modern rural settlement stems from one principal source (which we shall discuss at length later in this chapter). The subsequent development of this concept has, however, several different roots. Various social and economic principles have been used, and often mis-used, as the concept has 'matured'. Generally this process of maturation has been very complicated and the situation has not been helped by changes in the predominant attitudes towards rural planning. These attitudes can be chronologically summarised as:

- (a) Concern over the impact and influence of agriculture on rural communities.
- (b) Concern over the impact of urban centres and of urban values on rural settlement and their associated communities.
- (c) Concern over environmental issues and problems.

Whilst these dominant attitudes which considerably influenced rural planning cannot be said to relate to specific time periods, since they overlap and to some extent co-exist, they nonetheless have tended to dominate different periods of recent planning history. Concern for the relationship between agriculture and rural communities was the earliest determinant of modern rural planning attitudes. The Scott report of 1942 (see Chapter Two) was a reflection of this attitude, a point borne out by the minority report of Professor Dennison

in that document. In the 'fifties and 'sixties the fundamental consideration was of the urban impact on both rural settlement and rural society. But concern now has partly moved away from this towards an increasing consideration of environmental issues (c). Although it would be blatantly incorrect to suggest that planners are no longer concerned with either (a) or (b) above, interest has nonetheless been led away to what might be interpreted as more physical considerations. The current concern is particularly directed towards 'rural resource' planning, which is largely a product of the awareness of the 'natural' environment so typical of the early 'seventies.

The philosophy of rural settlement planning is quite complicated, but although it may have been influenced by these changes in the more general attitudes towards rural planning, it has nonetheless remained relatively consistent for over twenty years in some parts of the country. It is important to understand the nature and development of this rural philosophy.

3.2 The planning problems of English rural settlement

The basic approach to the planning of modern villages developed is a reaction to the general problems of rural settlement and rural society, which changed remarkably little in the first half of this century. Consequently, before we consider the conceptual basis in detail we should have a thorough understanding of the fundamental problems affecting the planning of rural settlement in England.

In the context of the following discussion it is important to realise the distinction between the so-called 'pressure' and 'remote' rural areas. 'Pressure' and 'remote' here are simple technical adjectives based on the relative proximity of rural areas to major urban centres or zones. The planning problems of the two types of area are essentially the same, differing only in degree. This difference of scale, however, is an important distinction.

Figures 3.1 and 3.2 illustrate two different interpretations of the pressure and remote rural areas in England and Wales. Figure 3.1 comes from a government planning bulletin, *Settlement in the countryside*¹. This defines as a remote rural area:

"Areas more than thirty miles from a town of 250,000 (population) or twenty miles from a town of over 50,000."

Figure 3.2 is taken from Thorburn's book *Planning villages*², and is based on an interpretation of population change from data within the 1961 census.

The fundamental planning problems of rural settlement in England may be generally classified as falling into five principal groups:

- (a) Pressure for development of rural settlement.
- (b) Change within rural settlements.
- (c) The need for preservation in rural settlement.

(d) The need for the restructuring of the rural settlement pattern.

(e) Rural deprivation.

Pressure for development of rural settlement

This is essentially a reflection of urban expansion into the countryside, which is itself partly a product of development controls and limited space for development within urban areas, and the desire for rural living. The latter cause of development pressure is often under-estimated perhaps due to the fact that there have been few attempts to measure it. One survey, however, has discovered that forty percent of householders living in urban areas would want to live in a village if they could afford to do so³. Pressure for development can take many forms. It is characteristically associated with residential uses but includes many other forms of development.

It follows from this simple discussion that pressure for development is highest in those villages located within the urban fringe, the belt of land surrounding urban areas. This has contributed to the development of restrictive 'Green Belt' policies for many of the large urban centres. In such areas this has generally not contained development pressure but merely re-directed it to those villages lying immediately outside the designated green belt by a process of leap frogging.

There is also considerable pressure for development in the villages of remote rural areas. Turton⁴ has compared the

pressure for development in three remote counties in the early sixties, West Suffolk, Norfolk and Shropshire, with the situation in three pressure counties, Essex, Hampshire and Hertfordshire. This showed clearly that there was considerably pressure for development in the remote areas and that this pressure was increasing rapidly in comparison with the pressure areas (see Table 3.1). Generally in these remote areas, pressure from urban expansion may be considered as much less than that in the pressure areas proper but this tends to be partly compensated for by development demand from retired and 'retiring' people and from prospective second home owners. Increasingly, too, the various armed forces based in some of the remote areas are providing significant pressure for residential development of adjacent villages, as it is more and more common for married personnel of all ranks to buy their own houses and not permanently live in 'married quarters'.

Change within rural settlements

Change in the English village is a very complicated phenomenon and one which has several facets. Demographic, social, economic and physical changes in the structure of the settlements are all important elements.

Demographic and social change are difficult to consider separately. Demographic changes such as in the age structure of the communities, often have important social consequences for villages. The nature of such changes will vary from one village to the next. Many large villages (as we shall discuss later in this thesis) have a tendency towards an increasingly

youthful population. In contrast many smaller villages often have an increasingly aged population. There are also subtle but distinct changes in the social class composition of rural communities. Many villages are subject to a process of 'social polarisation' (see Chapter 9) and in some this leads to communities almost totally dominated by the professional sectors of the middle classes. In addition there are other social changes which are less quantifiable but nonetheless important. There is a long recognised tendency towards the urbanisation of values, and the changing idea of the village as a community. All of these amount to what Ambrose has recently termed the 'quiet revolution'⁵.

Economic changes in the villages are generally associated with a continuation of now long established processes of decreasing rural employment opportunities. Related to this is the continued trend towards the decreasing self sufficiency of rural communities. Before the Second World War this was commonly reflected in the closure of the village blacksmiths and a widespread recession in a variety of other rural industries. Now the trend is continued, and may be simplistically represented with the closure of the village pubs and store, or when the local garage stops running a private bus service and concentrates on selling petrol to passing motorists. This is a crude picture of service 'rationalisation' in rural settlement, but one which is nonetheless commonly experienced in small and medium sized villages.

There is also dramatic physical change in the villages. There is no common traditional pattern of the physical develop-

ment of English settlement. The English village is partly a product of hidden historic patterns and a compromise between what is functional, local and regional patterns, individual decisions and frequent duplication of urban designs. It is difficult to make any generalisations about the pattern of physical development without meeting some contradiction to the rule. Nonetheless, even allowing for the lack of a formal, traditional pattern we can recognise that the scale of much modern development is without precedent. In this context the large estates of public or private housing, which are increasingly common, constitute an important physical change within the villages. A change which seems to be partly the product of stereotyped designs, aspects of building technology, the need to minimise the costs of house building, and political pressure on the rate of new home construction. In addition to new buildings there are other changes in the physical appearance of the English villages. There is much less dereliction, roads are usually metalled and urban style pavements are common. The aesthete may blame the loss of rusticity on such changes but it is not common to find many village residents complaining of these introductions.

Change in the villages is both good and bad, but it is true that in many of the smaller villages and hamlets the balance is probably to the detriment of the communities. An interpretation of this is that such communities are said to be 'decaying'. This is reflected in both the pressure and remote rural areas, although the phenomenon is more commonly associated with the latter. Edwards has commented on this

phenomenon ⁶. House ⁷ has written that, in North East England, only settlements with an adult population of over 450 show a consistent tendency towards increasing their populations. The fact that villages do decay in the pressure areas is illustrated by Kendalls' study of a South Midlands village ⁸.

The need for preservation in rural settlements

This is a widely held assumption that seems to cross both age and social class barriers. It influences the demands of rural residents and the proposals of planners alike. The assumption owes much to the wider moves for conservation of visual amenity in both town and countryside, although in this context it is specifically related to the often impassioned feelings about our English rural heritage.

Architectural preservation is controlled by the statutory provisions for listed buildings of architectural merit. In principle these provisions are the mechanism for the physical preservation of much of the built village, although in practice they leave much to be desired. Preservation, however, is often seen in a much wider context, particularly by village residents. In this way there are strong demands to maintain the 'status quo' in the villages, which are not directly associated with simple architectural preservation. These can embrace a wide range of issues such as the prevention of development on the fringe of the village and the need to preserve the village 'community'. Such demands may exist in attractive and less attractive villages alike.

The preservation issue is one of great importance in rural settlement planning. To many planners concerned with development control it may constitute a nuisance, as this is often the root cause of the often fervent local representations over planning issues in individual villages. To other planners preservation is a primary consideration in the formulation of village plans and in long term planning objectives.

The need for preservation is also an important issue within the villages themselves. This is usually thought of as the concern of the middle classes in the villages. Many villages do have preservation societies which are often very active social and recreational organisations. It is common for most of the members of these societies to come from middle class households. However, there is also a strong feeling about preservation in many working class households. Such households usually tend to be less articulate than their middle class counterparts and this may be a contributory factor to the assumption that it is the middle classes which are most concerned with village preservation issues. Research by the author in both Norfolk and Nottinghamshire indicates that this is not necessarily true⁹.

The need for the restructuring of the rural settlement pattern

The present pattern of rural settlement in England may be seen as largely a product of the processes of colonisation in the dark ages and the medieval period. After the middle ages population growth and migration was accommodated

largely by existing communities and much fewer new agricultural settlements were established. Consequently, the present size and spacing of English rural settlement is largely a reflection of a social and economic system and of a communications pattern that has long since decayed. Therefore, it has long been accepted that the present pattern of rural settlement in England is an archaic form that is no longer suited to the needs of modern society.

Given this situation, it is inevitable that both planners and academics alike should call for the rural settlement pattern to be restructured into a system that is more appropriate to the modern demands upon it.

The obsolescence of the present system has long been recognised. Probably the earliest appreciation of the problem and the first pressure for rural restructuring came early in this century from the geographer Harold Peake:

"Now is the time while all our country cottages are being replaced, to replan our villages on some well considered model. Let us not muddle through this as we have so many important crises in our past history, lest we stereotype a system that has outworn its usefulness and fail to seize the opportunity which is now offered to us to construct villages which are capable of sustaining a community life in keeping with modern conditions". 10

In his book *The English Village* and in an earlier article of 1916¹¹, Peake proposed that the rural population should be regrouped into fewer and larger communities. He suggested communities of a minimum size of 1,000 to 1,200 people.

Contemporary principles of rural restructuring are less radical than those of Peake. Generally, where any deliberate policy of restructuring exists, and this is by no means universal in the English counties, it is represented by a policy of redistributing the rural population within the existing framework of villages. This is achieved by concentrating further growth within a few selected villages. This naturally implies the limiting of development in smaller villages which leads to an acceleration of the natural processes of decline in these communities and therefore brings about a relative redistribution of the rural population into the larger villages. Green and Ayton of Norfolk County Planning Department, have examined the operation of this system in some detail ¹². Changes in this system will be very gradual particularly in the remoter areas where development pressure, the basic tool of the system, is less intense. Nevertheless, such policies do imply that some of the smaller villages must decline and possibly disappear altogether ¹³.

There are many problems in restructuring the rural settlement pattern in England. These involve a variety of technical problems such as the optimum size and the number of expanded villages. In addition there is the problem of the social commitment in many of the villages that are proposed to decline. Many of these villages have established communities, the members of which, if the experience of County Durham is a guide, would strongly resent any proposals for the planned decline of their villages. The conservative, anti-development attitude of many of the residents of larger villages or villages under considerable pressure for development, is well known. Less

well known, however, is the attitude of many rural residents, particularly in the remoter rural areas, that each community has a traditional right to grow. Both attitudes could constitute a real political force in any rigorous proposals for restructuring the settlement pattern of the English countryside.

Rural deprivation

It is clear that, in relation to urban centres, rural areas are deprived, in terms of: social and economic facilities; the provision of public transport; employment opportunities; and educational, welfare and recreational facilities. Pahl has considered this more fully ¹⁴.

Many of the salient elements of rural deprivation have become institutionalised in the past. Villagers have tended to accept that their location must result in poorer facilities, though some may have consoled themselves with the various advantages that rural living has over residence in a town. Most villagers, however, were unaware of their deprived situation, as awareness required a full knowledge of the relative situation in the towns and cities. Improved communications, the widespread adoption of urban values, the mass media (notably the television networks) and the in-migration of urban residents to the villages have changed this position.

Many rural residents, notably the ex-urbanites, are dissatisfied with the provision of various village facilities. Some, like thousands of villagers before them, move to the better facilities of the towns. Others stay, and these may form an important pressure group on local and central government. The situation has not been improved by various policy decisions taken at all levels of government. Educational re-organisation has closed more and more village schools. Health and welfare services, where they formerly existed on a part-time basis in some of the smaller villages, have become focussed on full time clinics in the largest of villages and in small towns. An admittedly over-extended railway network has been cut, so that few villages are now served by railway stations. These moves have promoted the development of a rural pressure group, albeit rather fragmented, lobbying both central and local government for improvement in village facilities.

The relative deprivation of rural areas tends to be selective. Connel¹⁵ has suggested that the working classes are more affected than the middle classes. This may still be so, although the recent fairly rapid rise in the rate of car ownership within the working classes, combined with wage/salary controls and the rise in petrol costs may have tended to equalise this social class differential. The two social groups most affected are the elderly and the young. Elderly people are often less capable of travelling to the facilities of the larger villages or towns either through infirmity or through lack of the necessary transport. Children and teenagers are in many ways

at even more of a disadvantage. Many have to travel some distance to school, most must look outside their home area for employment after their education, and few can find adequate, if any, recreational opportunities within their home communities.

Strickly speaking deprivation does not lie within the official planning remit, but few comprehensive proposals for planning rural settlements can ignore its existence. Deprivation leads to strong pressures on local authorities to improve the situation in villages. In most cases the response to this has been little more than ad hoc, and usually long overdue, improvements to highways, occasional developments of small shopping centres in the larger villages and small towns, and the extension of mains sewerage facilities to many villages which were formerly not connected to the system. The latter improvement is less a result of public pressure than of changes in the thinking of local government as to what is proper. It is generally maintained within local authorities that a considerable improvement in the facilities and services of rural areas is not economically feasible. In the author's experience this attitude is reflected in the thinking of planning departments at both 'district' and 'county' levels. Whether this attitude can be accepted in the social context is a controversial issue. Generally most planning policies for rural areas are based on the assumption that settlement reorganisation is the only premanent solution to rural deprivation.

We have only been able to consider the problems of planning rural settlement in England very briefly. The planning literature relating to this is fairly extensive and the reader is directed in particular to those texts cited and especially to Green's *Country planning*¹⁶ for further information.

It is of critical importance that these problems of planning rural settlements should be seen not in isolation but as part of a wider rural problem. This involves related planning problems in agriculture and forestry, rural amenity, urban overspill and expansion, industrial development and communications.

3.3 Early concepts in rural settlement planning

The early principles of rural settlement planning were not developed in isolation but within the general context of rural planning. Before the Second World War there were few specific ideas relating to the planning of villages and no established principles. This was probably a direct result of the slow progress in developing and improving planning legislation. As we noted in Chapter Two, few rural areas were required to prepare plans before 1947 and this must have acted as a damper on the innovation of new ideas.

Nonetheless, there were two broad concepts of rural planning which influenced the impact of early planning powers on rural settlement. The first was the concept of preservation. This stemmed largely from the widespread concern over the *spoiling* of the English countryside that we examined in Chapter Two. Pressure for the protection of rural amenity led to the development of several

ideas which influenced the development of rural settlement to varying degrees.

The idea of rural reservations was introduced by early regional planning schemes, and by the late twenties this had become the general mechanism for protecting large tracts of the countryside from undesirable development. Rural reservations were influenced by the American National Parks idea, but in practice they fell far short of such standards. Few reservations justified the initial enthusiasm with which they were proposed by the authors of some of the early planning schemes. Broadly, there were two forms of reservation in the countryside. Public reservations were tracts of land, usually owned by the local authority, which were to be retained in their present state for the enjoyment of the public. These were simple country parks. In practice few public reservations were established and of those that were, many were eventually developed. Private reservations were usually much larger areas of countryside, often including several villages. As with public reservations, these were supposedly protected from development but private reservations differed in that they did not have provision for public access. Many of the private reservations were parts of large country estates the owners of which entered into agreements with the local authority based upon exemptions from death duty liabilities. There were other advantages to estate owners, as a contemporary account by Davidge records:

"It is generally found that owners recognise the advantages to themselves of such a course [i.e. agreeing to a reservation contract with the local authority], more especially in the matter of evaluation of death duties. It is clear in the majority

of cases where an owner agrees to reserve part of his land as public or private open space he does not lose its building value. This is merely transferred to the same owners adjoining property which is more likely to be developed rapidly and at a better price when prospective purchasers realise that the amenities of the land they propose to buy will be protected".¹⁷

It is difficult to assess the value of reservations in preserving the countryside and villages. Generally they would seem to have been an ineffective tool but there were some exceptions where reservations seem to have been quite valuable¹⁸. Davidge¹⁹ and Thompson²⁰ were able to list several methods other than death duty agreement for establishing reservations. They investigated the possible use of legislation under the 1932 Housing Act or the 1925 Law of Property Act; the possibility of purchase by or leasing to local or central government; afforestation; grant by deed of gift; or purchase by local preservation societies, or the National Trust. None were thought to be as practical as the agreement system.

There were other considerations of preservation affecting rural settlement. In 1927, for example, Davidge²¹ called for the preservation of the older cores of the Kentish villages. This was an early example of concern in the embryonic planning profession with the architectural heritage of many villages. This concern was ill-supported by local authority powers too inadequate to give it any real effect.

Architectural preservation was enhanced by a variety of literature concerning the regulation of building design and construction materials. Such literature does not seem to have been deterred by the lack of statutory powers to enforce the recommended controls. Two of the more notable discussions were the report of the Isle of Wight Planning and Development Committee and the Council for the

Preservation of Rural England (a joint report)²², and the Oxfordshire regional planning report of 1931.²³

The second concept of this early period and one which still exerts considerable influence on planning practice, was land use zoning. This too seems to have had its origins in America²⁴ and was subsequently introduced into British planning. The concept was fairly rapidly diffused through the various regional planning reports. Generally villages were likely to lie within one of three zones. The 'residential zone' was an area of urban expansion. Because of the compensation problem of the early planning legislation (discussed briefly in Chapter Two), the actual amount of land needed for expansion was usually vastly exaggerated, and consequently these residential zones often covered vast areas of the countryside. In fact, by 1937 there was sufficient land zoned for housing in Britain, mostly in this type of zone, to accommodate 350 million people²⁵. The residential zone in the Mid Surrey scheme²⁶ is a good example of vast numbers of villages being placed in this development zone.

The 'rural zone' was considered an area of more limited development. Development restrictions within the zones were brought about by controlling the density of development and not its location. The actual nature of density restrictions varied from report to report and seems to have been more a function of the attitudes of the authors than of local considerations. One of the lowest maximum density limits was one house in ten acres as suggested in the Oxfordshire scheme of 1931,²⁷ but this ranged upwards to one un-named area mentioned by Abercrombie²⁸ in which the maximum limit was four

houses per acre in the rural zone.

The third zone was the 'agricultural zone'. This was seen as a protected area in which only agricultural or associated development would be permitted or where other residential development would be permitted only at very low densities. Generally the restrictions proposed for this rural zone were very similar to those currently applying to open countryside in England and Wales.

Zoning in the inter-war period was not very successful in regulating development in the countryside or in the villages. This is less a criticism of the concept of zoning, although the dependence on density restrictions caused many problems, than of the local authorities and of inadequate planning legislation. Nevertheless the idea of zoning remained popular. For example, in 1939 a government report on the preservation of the countryside recommended not a new approach or new legislation as a solution to the rural problem but a new type of 'rural' zone. ²⁹

One point shared by both the preservation and zoning concepts was the importance of the inter-war regional planning schemes in the development of these ideas. Also both ideas were innovated largely in America, and were subsequently diffused throughout rural Britain. The regional planning schemes seem to have been vital instruments in this diffusion process. An examination of the Department of the Environments' collection of regional planning reports indicates that there was a very strong personal element in the English development of these two ideas. The DoE library at Westminster contains forty-

nine inter-war regional planning reports dealing wholly or in part with rural areas. Remarkably, over half of these (thirty) are produced by various combinations of only nine people. It is clear that relatively few individuals were responsible for the development of the ideas of preservation and zoning within the English context. In particular, Davidge, Abercombe and the Earl of Mayo were important catalysts between the innovation of these concepts and their practical introduction to rural areas. Appendix 1 considers the authorship of these reports in more detail.

3.4 The evolution of the modern concept of planning rural settlements

The planning of rural settlement in England from the operation of simple development controls to the preparation of forward plans from the level of the individual village up to regional planning proposals, is dominated by one concept, selected village development. This principle leads to the concentration of most rural residential development (and much associated development also) into a few selected centres, the 'growth villages'. In addition the various socio-economic facilities of rural areas are increasingly concentrated into these selected centres. Broadly, the principle is suited to both pressure and remote rural areas. In pressure areas the concentration of development into a few areas allows the planning authorities to follow a more restrictive policy in the majority of villages, many of which might otherwise be spoilt by excessive development. In addition, the concentration of facilities in selected villages allows for a more effective distribution of sparse rural facilities. The principle here is that large numbers

of rural residents living in the selected villages are served by a relatively large number of village shops, services and a range of other facilities. People in the surrounding, smaller villages who would otherwise have to travel to the nearest town for many facilities, also have the opportunity of using more convenient, local centres (we will examine the actual distribution of facilities and, more important, their use, in Chapter 11).

In the remoter rural areas the same principle serves to overcome their chief problem, decay brought about by continued rural depopulation. The study of rural depopulation is the subject of a number of quite different analytical approaches and of an extensive literature. Here we are concerned with the common observation that economic factors, in particular, the decline of agricultural and other employment opportunities in rural areas, and social factors which are largely a consequence of poor rural facilities and of a reduction in the attraction of village life, are fundamental determinants of depopulation. Selected village development constructs a settlement framework in which the selected centres can act as growth points to which new rural employment can be attracted. Also the theory of concentration into centres (often called 'key' villages) offers a convenient system for improving rural facilities, consequently making village life more attractive to the people in remote rural areas.

The social considerations of the concept of selected village development are important, but in reality the economic practicality of the principle is probably more valuable. For example, the economics of building technology make it cheaper to build houses in large concentrations. Consequently 'growth villages' have obvious attractions

for both public and private development processes. Also there are financial pressures on local authorities which encourage the concentration of development on villages with established facilities, notably schools and mains sewerage.

This, then, is the concept which dominates contemporary village planning. The operation of the concept will be reviewed in Chapter Four, but it is necessary here to understand the principle in some detail to be able to follow its development.

The idea of selected village development, or elements of it, appears in only one of the inter-war regional planning schemes. This was the *Cambridgeshire regional planning report* of 1934, prepared by Davidge³⁰. There is no suggestion, however, that the idea was the personal innovation of Davidge. None of the five plans he prepared for rural areas before 1934 contained this concept, and the two³¹ that he prepared after the Cambridgeshire report contain no selected village development proposals. In fact, as we shall see later, the Cambridgeshire scheme was influenced by ideas that had been developing in the county for ten years prior to the publication of the report. As such the modern concept of village planning was not born in the planning literature of the period but in aspects of specific local 'planning' practice.

The basis for the selected village development ideas contained in the 1934 Cambridgeshire report, and the genesis of the modern principle, was the concept of the 'regional community' as developed by Henry Morris, who was chief education officer for Cambridgeshire from 1922 to 1954. Morris is a major figure in modern educational

history, his contribution to the philosophy behind contemporary educational architecture is particularly great. Morris was motivated by the need for educational reform, not merely for improved education of the school population, but in the wider context of a general reconstruction of society. Furthermore he considered that planning was a major tool in any scheme of reconstruction. Morris's biographer, Ree, has stated:

"Morris pinned his faith in education, and added two essentials. First we must plan : he insisted that the visions of planners should extend to a far wider horizon than usual. They should be concerned not merely with economic efficiency, not merely with sewers and roads and housing, but with the total social scene. This newly planned environment should therefore serve cultural as well as economic and educational needs. Secondly we must reconstruct our conceptions of education so that it will be co-terminous with life." 32

Morris's contribution to rural settlement planning was the fairly simple idea that the future of the English village lay not with the consideration of the individual village as the fundamental unit, but with the adoption of policies that recognised the need to group social and economic facilities on the basis of the regional communities. He saw that, if most villages continued to be considered as individual entities, each having its own problems, then many would continue to decay. If, however, their problems were considered in a wider perspective and a corporate solution were proposed, then few villages need decline. The present corporate solution is the concentration of most development and of socio-economic facilities at one centre. Morris's special instrument was the 'village college' idea, which was implemented within the context of a 'regional community' of villages.

Morris's conception of the village college was based on the impossibility of providing a full range of social and cultural facilities at every English village. Within his 'regional perspective' he suggested that such facilities should be concentrated in one centre convenient for a group of villages. Morris considered that these facilities would be best concentrated at one centre within the selected village, and that the only suitable institution for both location and organisation within many villages was the village school. Hence his village colleges were to be new buildings, or extended old schools which carried out, not only their usual school functions during the day, but also agricultural and adult education, besides incorporating an extensive range of social and community facilities to be shared by all members of the home and neighbouring villages, the regional community. Morris explained this idea at length in a memorandum published in 1924, *The village college*³³.

After some effective lobbying from Morris, the village college idea was adopted by the Cambridgeshire Education Committee. Consequently the concept was fairly well established by the time Davidge was commissioned to prepare the regional planning report for the county. We do not know whether the adoption of this concept in the report was through Davidge's initiative or through pressure placed on him by the Education Department and by The Cambridgeshire Rural Community Council. In either case it is to Davidge's credit that he extended the idea to the concentration of development at those villages selected for village colleges³⁴. Davidge proposed eight selected centres in the county, a low number of selected villages by modern standards, although this was later increased to eleven proposed centres, according to the report of the

Agricultural Economics Research Institute in 1944³⁵.

By 1939 four village colleges had been built in Cambridgeshire, each the centre of a regional community of about ten other villages. These seem to have reflected Morris's original idea fairly closely. The out-break of the Second World War prevented further developments, and by the time the war had ended, the new Education Act of 1944 was in effect and this altered the immediate priorities of the Cambridgeshire Education Committee. Morris continued to campaign for the construction of more village colleges, although unsuccessfully, at least until 1955, when a broadcast he had given was published in *The Listener* of 10th February. Nonetheless, the idea of the regional community had become established. Whilst the village college idea became dormant, the concentration of facilities and development came to be progressively adopted by the English counties. In fact, more recently, new village colleges have been built in Cambridgeshire and the idea has gained considerable interest elsewhere.

Morris made one other contribution to planning philosophy, the idea of a socially conscious and responsible planning system. The idea was not altogether new in the inter-war period and there has been considerable pressure for what is now termed 'social planning' ever since³⁶, but the principle, although popular with many planners, still remains to be explicitly incorporated in the body of planning legislation.

3.5 Post-war progress in the concept of selected village development

To say that Morris was the father of modern rural settlement planning would be to ignore the substantial contributions to the development of the theory from various literary sources and from many planning departments. After the Second World War the regional community and village planning ideas started to be recognised in the context of rural settlement planning outside Cambridgeshire. The Oxford-based Agricultural Economics Research Institute ³⁷ and the East Sussex Rural Community Council ³⁸ praised Morris's concept. In 1946 a planning scheme for West Cumberland commissioned by the Minister of Town and Country Planning, proposed the use of selected village development techniques in that area ³⁹.

Morris's ideas of a regional community served by a single selected village gained intellectual support from central place theory and practical support from the work of Dickinson and, later, Bracey in England. Central place theory as initially proposed by Christaller ⁴⁰ in 1933 and subsequently developed by Lösch ⁴¹ in 1938 (to be examined in more detail, along with the work of Dickinson and Bracey, in Chapter Five), provided a theoretical model which supported the idea of a regional community of several small villages and hamlets focussed upon one central village. Central place theory gave some academic respectability to Morris's rather simple, common sense idea.

In 1942 Dickinson published a paper that suggested the concentration of services and other rural facilities was a natural process in East Anglia ⁴². Bracey's later and more extensive works in South

West England have supported this suggestion. This gave added weight to the idea of selected village development by establishing a natural precedent for the process in this country.

The most significant extension of the selected village development concept was brought about by the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act. This required all county authorities to prepare a county development plan supported by a written statement, and to submit this to the Minister for approval. This provided the impetus for a number of more imaginative authorities to embody a policy of selected village development. Amongst the counties adopting this concept were Cambridgeshire, Cornwall, County Durham, East Sussex, the Isle of Wight, Nottinghamshire and Somerset. It is important here to grasp a basic distinction between selected village development and 'key' village policies. In the early 'fifties several counties followed key village policies but these cannot be properly termed comprehensive, selected village development policies. The distinction between these terms followed by the author, is that key village policies propose the concentration of rural facilities in selected centres but do not extend concentration to the location of new development. A selected village development policy is one which proposes the concentration of both facilities and development in the selected centres. West Sussex and Surrey were examples of counties following key village policies. More rarely, some counties proposed the concentration of development in selected villages but not of services or facilities, although it is possible that these, and counties without a written rural settlement policy, may have followed this principle in practice through the simple financial incentives of focussing development on those villages with facilities that were adequate.

Consequently, by the middle 'fifties only a few county authorities were specifically following a comprehensive policy of selected village development. There seems to be no common link between these counties which might explain why these, and not the other counties, adopted such policies at the time. Cambridgeshire and East Sussex were both counties of limited development pressure whose policies were considerably influenced by the original ideas of Morris. The Isle of Wight plan was simply a common sense proposal to resolve the problems of relatively high development pressure in parts of the Island with the poor facilities of other parts. Somerset learnt heavily on the work of Bracey in the central villages of the county⁴⁴, whilst the very controversial restructuring proposals in County Durham were largely related to the archaic structure of mining villages in the county⁴⁵.

The system of selected village development had obvious appeal to county planning departments. The concept had a theoretical basis in central place theory and in research concerning English central villages. If offered a simple and convenient system for a practical reorganisation of the pattern of rural settlement in both pressure and remote areas. The concept proposed a progressive improvement of rural facilities in selected centres and acted as a planning framework through which the depopulation of many areas of the countryside might be stemmed. In addition, by the mid-sixties a number of county authorities had been implementing the system for ten years and consequently many of the practical problems of the system had been ironed out. With such appeal it is not surprising that as county authorities came to review their county development plans, as they were bound to do by the planning legislation, more and more came to adopt selected

village development policies. The modification of the county development plan for Devon affords a good example of this.

The Devon county plan was submitted to the Minister in 1953 and, after characteristic delays at the Ministry, was approved in October 1959. This plan did not embody a selected village development scheme. The later adoption of the concept seems to owe much to independent research in Devon. Research in Devon villages, first by Mitchell ⁴⁶ and later by Saville ⁴⁷, highlighted the problems of decaying rural communities in the county. Saville proposed that as most villages were too small to be considered as nuclei for satisfactory social and economic living in the future, the county should adopt a policy of concentrating facilities into a limited number of key villages. In September, 1964, seven years after Saville's work had been published and eleven years after the county had proposed to consider the situation of rural settlement in Devon, the planning department presented its review of the county development plan. This analysed the rural situation in some depth and concluded:

"In short, resources have not been used to their best advantages, and there is, therefore, a need for a rural settlement policy to ensure that services, facilities and new development are provided or maintained in the most appropriate places and that these various efforts to improve the environment support one another".

and added,

"These can best be achieved by ensuring that major extensions of residential development and public utilities are only permitted in selected key settlements (as well as in towns). It will be those settlements that industries requiring a rural location will be encouraged, where appropriate, to go. Where social services may be shared by a group of villages (e.g. doctors, policemen) they should be located in these key settlements". ⁴⁸

The second review of the county development plan suggested that the selected village development policy adopted in 1964 had stemmed rural depopulation in the county ⁴⁹.

By the mid-sixties more counties were following a stated policy of selected village development and now most English counties follow this principle. Paradoxically, however, many county authorities have adopted the concept not because of its conceptual appeal, its sound testing by other authorities, or its social and economic benefits (as hypothesised) for rural communities, but through the negative element of the financial benefits of concentration of development and facilities.

In the period, as more and more authorities were adopting this principle for planning their rural settlement, the principle itself was being improved. In 1958 Lloyd ⁵⁰ suggested that selected rural centres should be expanded to target populations of 15,000 to 25,000 population. The idea received some support at the time but has subsequently lost favour. Later work by staff of the Norfolk ⁵¹ and Cambridgeshire ⁵² County Planning Departments involving threshold analysis of facility provision has suggested a more realistic target population of 5,000 for rural service centres. Recent research has also investigated the feasibility of encouraging the deliberate decline of many small villages through the 'restructuring' objective of selected village development ⁵³. County development plans in the remoter rural areas have selected centres for holding or even expanding population, but up until now little has been done about accelerating the decline of many small settlements (with the exception of County Durham where experience has shown that this is a difficult operation).

Generally, the various planning reports have added significantly to the literature on selected village development. The reports of the Isle of Wight ⁵⁴, Devon ⁵⁵, Huntingdonshire ⁵⁶, and Norfolk ⁵⁷, have been particularly valuable.

More recently the concept of selected village development and of the regional community have been adapted to application in the context of the regional planning of some remoter rural areas. The idea of the 'trigger area' as proposed by the Development Commissioners in 1966 ⁵⁸ may be seen as a development of the principle of the regional community. The idea has been applied to Welsh regional planning ⁵⁹. No doubt the application of the idea here owes much to the parallels with the established 'growth point' principle of modern regional planning, but the small size of the centres selected for expansion in Wales underlines the connection with selected village development.

Selected village development is not a thoroughly thought out concept. It owes its origins to theories of educational reform. What theoretical basis it now has is partly a consequence of central place theory and partly of research that has been carried out usually after the concept has been applied to an area (hardly a basis for objective analysis). It is only fair to add that whilst some of this limited research has been very valuable in refining otherwise crude ideas, there has been misuse of fundamental academic principles. Thomas ⁶⁰ has commented on the deficiencies of using threshold analysis in selected village development. In addition this study will show that the concept of 'community' is frequently misused (see Chapter 12).

3.6 The 'Green Belt' concept

The concept of the green belt is not specifically related to rural settlement planning; indeed, the idea is generally considered to be an element of the urban planning methodology. Nonetheless, green belts have an important function in rural planning both in terms of the preservation of rural amenity and the promotion of countryside recreation, and also in the context of development control in rural areas. Consequently, any consideration of the conceptual basis of rural settlement planning would be incomplete without looking at the idea of the green belt.

A green belt was first proposed by Unwin in a report to the Greater London Regional Planning Committee ⁶¹ in 1933. Unwin's term for this area was a 'green girdle'. The idea seems to have found immediate favour and was followed by The Green Belt (London and Home Counties) Act, 1938. The concept was restricted to the Capital for two decades.

In 1955 the Minister of Housing and Local Government launched a more extensive green belt policy. This was not contained in legislation, but in a ministerial circular (No. 45/55) a method which, as we shall see again in Chapter Four, central government increasingly uses to influence local planning authorities. The circular laid down a framework of development considerations which allowed for 'conforming' land uses to be established or extended within a green belt area, but forbade planning authorities to grant planning permission to 'non conforming' development such as sporadic residential development ⁶²:

"Inside a green belt, approval should not be given except in very special circumstances, for the construction of new buildings or for the change of use of existing buildings for purposes other than agriculture, sport, cemeteries, institutions standing in extensive grounds or other uses appropriate to a rural area.

Apart from a strictly limited amount of infilling and rounding off, existing towns and villages inside a green belt should not be allowed to expand further". 63

This was a very restrictive policy, but it served to accentuate the importance of selected village development principles in pressure areas. By 1969 there were seventeen green belts in England surrounding urban areas as large as Greater London and as small as Cheltenham and Gloucester. Where these green belts enclosed a number of villages local planning authorities overcame the development restrictions of circular 42/55 by establishing what have come to be called 'white area windows' around selected villages. This in effect created small islands within the green belt which were exempt from the development restrictions which applied to the remainder of the area. In principle at least this has tended to increase further the concentration of development into selected villages in pressure areas.

3.7 Alternative ideas of planning English rural settlement

The most recent development of ideas of planning rural settlement in this country have focussed on two courses. Neither has achieved much popularity, but as they have been proposed as alternative methods of planning rural settlement we should consider them here.

To say that the new village is a recent introduction to the pattern of rural settlement in England would be to display a profound ignorance of the process which established that pattern. There are many settlements in England which owe their origins to planned villages of the past (see Chapter Two). Other have been established on, or adjacent to the site of existing settlements, although it is more accurate to consider these are 'regulated' rather than new villages. Nevertheless, new villages, such as these, have not been a frequent element of development in the past and as such the recent revival of this element of rural settlement is a significant feature of modern rural planning.

Thorburn sees the new village as the most recent attempt to recapture the old village type environment with its established social order and individual identity⁶⁴. It is interesting in this context to note the analagous association between the concept of the 'neighbourhood' as embodied in the design of the modern British new towns, and the contemporary new villages. The quality of life in a village, as opposed to that in a town, is popularly thought to be better. In the past this was one of the motivating forces behind the development of the early suburbs, and it certainly influenced Howard's concept of the garden city and its subsequent manifestations in the British new towns. The new village has been given added impetus by the need to experiment with new forms of development, a consequence of the physical and social shortcomings of much urban and rural development. Governments, religious orders, landowners and industrialists have been building new villages for centuries but the motivating forces behind modern new villages and the revival of the idea are very different to those of the past.

The term new village, has an emotional value to prospective house buyers that speculative developers and estate agents are aware of, It is becoming increasingly common to find developers referring to their estates as villages or even new villages, even though such developments are usually contiguous with an existing built up area, lack their own facilities and otherwise do not resemble a separate village. Recently several developers have put forward proposals for developments which can properly be considered new villages. These can be differentiated from the new village of the estate agents' brochure by their free standing, green field location and the attempt that has been made to recapture some of the elements of the traditional village. The first proposal for a new village did not come from a private developer, although most subsequent proposals have. The county planning department of Cambridgeshire, the county in which Morris's ideas of a regional community were developed, followed a course of selected village development in their county plan published in 1952. Subsequent development pressure on the Cambridge fringe, the absorption of spare development capacity in the selected rural centres, and reactions from residents to proposed development of other villages, created a situation in which the development of a completely new centre was proposed. Subsequently a contractor was approached to act as both contractor and developer for a pilot new village. The site chosen was at Bar Hill, five miles north-west of the city centre. By 1964 the contractor had obtained outline planning permission and development of the site started the following year ⁶⁵. Bar Hill is proposed to accommodate 4,000 people with a full range of facilities. A visit to the site in September, 1974, indicated that whilst substantial development had occurred and the site was now occupied there was still some construction to be completed.

It is not completely accurate to say that Bar Hill was the first proposal for a modern new village. In 1946 Sharp was appointed as the planning advisor to the Forestry Commission. Up to this point the Commission had followed a policy of dispersal for accommodating their workers in their larger afforestation projects. Sharp, however, pointed out the social and economic benefits of concentration and the Commission subsequently developed three new villages at Kielder, Stonehaugh and Byrness in Northumberland. A fourth site was proposed for the development of a village to be called Comb, also in Northumberland, but this was never developed. The Commission has not experimented with new villages since. The origin of these villages seems to owe more to new villages of the past than those of the modern 'revival'. Kielder, Stonehaugh and Byrness were all created for a single function, forestry, just as the new villages of history had often been associated with a predominant function whether it was agricultural, industrial or political. In contrast the modern new villages, such as Bar Hill, seem to be multi-goal developments.

Since Bar Hill was proposed only a few other new villages have appeared. The most notable of these is New Ash Green in Kent⁶⁶. Bar Hill, New Ash Green and the proposals for Marks Tey in Essex⁶⁷ are all prospective large centres by rural standards. The notable exception is Rushbrooke in Suffolk⁶⁸, which is more like a modern version of an estate village and cannot strictly be considered as a new village as it represents the complete redevelopment of a former settlement. Other new villages have been proposed, principally within the English pressure counties, but many have been refused outline planning permission by local planning authorities which considered these to represent unjustified development of agricultural land.

In principle the new village has several attractions over the development of existing village centres:

(a) Development of new villages could alleviate pressure on existing villages for the provision of housing. This would act as a strong impetus to the preservation of rural settlement.

(b) The new village, built as a single unit, can provide a large amount of new housing at a lower cost than conventional extensions to existing villages.

(c) Developers provide new villages with a full range of facilities and services and if development is properly phased there need be no time lag between the completion of housing and of services.

(d) The new village could provide planners with a positive tool to improve the spatial arrangement of villages acting as rural centres in the countryside.

However, there are some obvious disadvantages entailed in the development of new villages as opposed to expanding existing villages:

(a) Development in existing villages often absorbs spare capacity in essential facilities such as schools, sewers, etc. In new villages all the public utilities, shopping, service and recreational facilities, and some of the educational needs will have to be provided. This will make the net cost of providing housing, per unit, in new villages, generally higher than in expanding villages.

(b) In practice the level of facilities, at least initially, at new villages is poorer than that of an established village of similar size. This is quite clear in the new villages at Bar Hill and New Ash Green⁶⁹. Furthermore, observations of the development of the shopping/service centres of these two new villages, and consideration of their situation relative to established villages, indicates that this situation is likely to continue (see Appendix 2).

(c) The development of a new community will consume more agricultural land than the provision of the same number of houses at similar density, at expanding villages.

(d) People moving to a new village will encounter the problem that there is no sense of community. The establishment of village trusts by the developers may aid community development but nonetheless this is a very slow process. There is some evidence to suggest that this initial lack of community may create a duplicate state to that in the British new towns known as 'new town blues'.

Currently the new village is seen as an experimental idea that has produced some interesting schemes of rural design (notably at New Ash Green) but which is too costly and impractical to become of widespread use. The new village may well be a useful technique in circumstances where there is the need, and an adequate site, for development, but the English countryside is already too crowded with other villages to encourage its widespread use (as is testified by the planning objective to 'restructure' the settlement pattern).

Nonetheless, there have been some proposals to build new villages⁷⁰ although, as yet, none of these have started to be developed.

The opposite attitude to the concentration of development must be an even spread of building over all existing settlements. Whilst this idea has not yet been actively proposed by any planning authority, the principle has nonetheless gained some support in recent years and the idea may come to represent an alternative method of planning rural settlement.

The even spread of development, as an idea, has its origins in the attitude that planning policy in rural settlements is very restrictive and that it is based on protectionist considerations that may not be in the best interest of the villages. The situation is reinforced by the negative basis of planning legislation. The contemporary statutes are more concerned with what cannot be done than what may be, and this is especially true in the rural context. Smart⁷¹, Wibberly⁷², and Doubleday⁷³ have all examined this protectionist basis.

The even spread of development, it is suggested, would adopt a more flexible interpretation of planning controls, so that whilst sporadic countryside development would still be discouraged, there would be fewer restrictions on the development of small villages. Servicing of villages would not be dependent on a hierarchical approach with a group of villages being dependent on a central village. Instead, facilities would be shared between a cluster of villages, one village having a selection of shops, another a primary school, another the library and health centre etc. In addition, facilities and services not provided within the cluster might be partly supplied

by mobile facilities. As such the system is dependent on 'lateral' provision of basic services. The idea of lateral provision is new but the basic unit of the idea, a distinct and self reliant village cluster, is fundamentally the same as Morris's original idea of the regional community.

This principle has gained some support amongst many younger planners concerned with positive planning and a protectionist philosophy which they often see as a fallacy. There has been some support, too, amongst the more progressive planning authorities who are aware of the deficiencies of the present system and who are receptive to new ideas ⁷⁴. In practice, however, development spread has found little favour. The economic considerations of the concentration of facilities and housing are strongly weighted against the principle. There is considerable latent opposition in the conservation and agricultural lobbies. Finally the basis of existing facility investment and the tradition of use is fundamentally hierarchically, and not laterally, based. A sudden change to lateral servicing may lead to conflict in the pattern of use of facilities and their provision. A clearly undesirable situation within rural areas in which the pattern of existing facility provision often leaves much to be desired.

The attitude of central government to the idea of the even spread of development is not clear. However, the idea obviously conflicts with development control within green belts areas and it is quite feasible that the Department of the Environment would take a dim view of a policy which supported a lax interpretation of circular 42/55.

Whilst one can share the concern of exponents of the even spread of development, over protectionist policies and negative planning in rural areas, it does not follow that 'development spread' is the correct solution. For the reasons outlined above it is unrealistic to propose the even spread of development as an alternative concept to selected village development (we will discuss this again in Chapter 5 and Chapter 13).

3.8 Summary

Contemporary rural settlement planning is dominated by one principle, the concept of selected village development. The concentration of investment, development and social and economic facilities on selected rural centres offers a comprehensive solution to the various problems of planning villages in England.

The concept originated with the ideas of Henry Morris on regional communities of villages and was applied in the inter-war period through a policy of 'village colleges' in Cambridgeshire. After the Second World War the principle of selected village development, with support from central place theory and research on 'central villages' in England, was adopted by a few progressive county planning authorities in the preparation of county development plans. Throughout the 'fifties and 'sixties, as the practical advantages of the principle became clear, the concept became more widespread and it is now almost universally applied in the English counties.

The conceptual development of methods of planning rural settlement did not stop with Morris (see Figure 3.3). After the war the principle of green belts came to influence the development of many

villages near large urban centres. The idea of new villages was revised in the 'sixties. Initially new villages were treated with much enthusiasm and a few such centres were developed. The practical limitations of the idea in terms of finance and an already overcrowded rural settlement pattern, have since curtailed its popularity. More recently the system of development spread, with its lateral provision of services within village clusters, has gained some favour. However, the existing commitment in terms of hierarchical provision of rural facilities and economic considerations are likely to work against the adoption of planning policies based on the even spread of development and investment amongst many village centres.

FOOTNOTES

1. HMSO., *Settlement in the countryside: A planning method*. Ministry of Housing and Local Government. Planning bulletin no. 8, (1967).
2. A. Thorburn; *Planning villages*. (1971), p.25.
3. Mass Observations Ltd. and Hampshire County Planning Department, *Village life in Hampshire*. (1966).
4. R. Turton. 'Towards a rural planning policy'. *Journal of the Town Planning Institute* 50 (1964), pp.142-144.
5. P. Ambrose, *The quiet revolution: Social change in a Sussex village, 1871 - 1971*. (1974).
6. J.A. Edwards, 'The viability of lower size order settlements in rural areas : A case study of North East England'. *Sociologia Ruralis* 11 (1971), pp.247 - 275.
7. J.W. House, *Rural North East England (Northumberland and Durham) 1951 - 1961*. Report to the Development Commissioners. Papers on Migration and Mobility in North East England no. 1. (1965).
8. D. Kendall, 'Portrait of a disappearing English village'. *Sociologia Ruralis* 3 (1963), pp.157 - 165.
9. Evidence from villages in the two case study areas of North Norfolk and South Nottinghamshire, of this survey, indicates that the

heads of working class households do not assume preservation to be as important an issue as do their middle class counterparts. However, this certainly does not mean that they do not value preservation as an issue at all. The situation in the village of Stiffkey in Norfolk illustrates this point. A proposal to develop part of the attractive High Street in Stiffkey has aroused reactions from within the community and a strong preservation movement now exists. This movement is directed by one middle class householder and supported almost unanimously by other middle class residents in the village. Working class households that were interviewed in the village consider, almost without exception, that poor employment and public transport in the area are more important issues, but that the question of village preservation was none the less very important.

10. H. Peake, *The English village: The origin and decay of its community, an anthropological approach*. (1922), p.236.

11. H. Peake, 'The regrouping of the rural population'. *Town Planning Review* 7 (1916 - 1918), p.243-250.

12. R. J. Green and J. B. Ayton, *Changes in the pattern of rural settlement*. Paper presented to the Town Planning Institute research conference on 'Planning for the changing countryside' (1967).

13. Only in County Durham have there been any steps towards actively phasing out some small, non-viable villages. There are a number of texts discussing this policy but the best general discussion is; A. Blowers, 'The declining villages of County Durham'. A section in the Open University course book *Social Geography* (1972). It is worth

noting that a County Council review of 1978 effectively abolished this policy of accelerated decay of many small settlements.

14. R. Pahl, *Whose city*. (1970) pp. 97 - 112.
15. J. Connel, 'Green belt country'. *New Society* 18 (1971), pp.304-306.
16. R.J. Green, *Country planning: The future of the rural regions*. (1971)
17. W.R. Davidge, *Bedfordshire regional planning report*. (1937).
18. One example of the successful application of rural reservations is the South Downs in Sussex. The Downs lie immediately north of the almost continuous urban area extending from Chichester in the west to Newhaven in the east, a distance of thirty-seven miles. In the inter-war period much of the adjacent downland and its associated villages was under pressure of development from these coastal towns and in particular from Brighton. Reservation schemes covering most of the Sussex downs above the 150 foot contour were suggested in the regional planning schemes of 1928 (for Brighton, Hove and district) and 1929 (for the West Sussex coast and towns). Subsequently various reservation agreements took place and these protected much of the threatened downland until the implementation of more extensive powers, under the County Development Plan of 1953.
19. W.R. Davidge, *op cit* (Footnote 17).
20. W.H. Thompson, *Cornwall: A survey of its coast, moors and valleys with suggestions for the preservation of amenities*. (1930).
21. W.R. Davidge, *North West Kent and South West Kent joint regional town planning report*. (1927).

22. Isle of Wight Planning and Development Committee and The Council for the Preservation of Rural England, *Planning for the future development of the Isle of Wight*. (1938), p.9 - 16.
23. Earl of Mayo, S.D. Adshead and P. Abercrombie, *Regional planning report on Oxfordshire*. (1931).
24. T. Adams, *Outline of town and city planning: A review of past efforts and modern aims*. (1935).
25. J.B Cullingworth, *Town and country planning in Britain*. (4th ed. 1972), p. 22.
26. T. Adams, F.L. Thompson and G.M. Fry, *Mid Surrey regional planning scheme*. (1928).
27. Earl of Mayo, S.D. Adshead and P, Abercrombie, op cit.(foot-note 23).
28. P. Abercrombie, and S.A. Kelly, *Cumbrian regional planning scheme*. (1932).
29. HMSO. *Report on the preservation of the countryside*. Town and Country Planning Advisory Committee. Ministry of Health. (1939).
30. W.R. Davidge, *The Cambridgeshire regional planning report*. (1934).
31. W.R. Davidge, op cit (Footnote 17) and,
W.R. Davidge, *Buckinghamshire regional plan*. (1935).

32. H. Ree, *Educator Extraordinary: The life and achievements of Henry Morris, 1889 - 1961*. (1973).

33. H. Morris, *The village college: Being a memorandum on the provision of educational and social facilities for the countryside, with special reference to Cambridgeshire*. (1924).

Morris wrote a number of later articles and papers on this topic, see H. Ree, *op cit.*(footnote 32). pp. 159 - 160. Of these one of the most useful was;

H. Morris, *Education and the countryside*, in J. Needham (ed.) *The teacher of nations* (1942).

34. W.R. Davidge, *op cit.* (Footnote 30.) pp. 62 - 63.

35. Agricultural Economics Research Institute, *Country planning*. (1944), p. 161.

36. In the context of rural planning see in particular;

G.D. Mitchell, The relevance of group dynamics to rural planning problems. *Sociological Review* 43 (1951), pp. 1 - 16.

W.H. Williams, Sociological criteria for assessing policies. In J. Ashton and W.H. Long (eds.) *The remoter rural areas of Britain* (1972), pp. 202 - 214.

R.E. Pahl, *Whose city*. (1970), pp. 55 - 67.

D.C. Thorns, 'The changing system or rural stratification'. *Sociologia Ruralis* 8 (1968), pp. 161 - 178.

G. Popplestone, 'Expansion of small settlements'. *Town and Country Planning* 35 (1967), pp. 121 - 122.

37. Agricultural Economics Research Institute, *op cit.* (Footnote 35). pp. 160 - 162.

38. East Sussex Rural Community Council, *Tomorrow in East Sussex* (1946) p. 128.
39. J.S. Allen and R.H. Mattocks, *West Cumberland* (1946).
40. W.H. Christaller, *Die zentralen orte in Suddeutschland: Eine ekonomisch geographische untersuchung uber die gesetzmassigkeit der verbreitung and entwirlung der mit stadtischen funktionen.* (1933).
41. A. Lösch, 'The nature of economic regions'. *Southern Economic Journal* 5 (1938) pp. 71 - 78.
42. R. E. Dickinson, 'The social basis of physical planning'. *Sociological Review* 34 (1942), pp. 51 - 67, and 165 - 182.
43. H.E. Bracey, *Social provision in rural Wiltshire.* (1952). also;
H.E. Bracey, 'Towns as rural service centres: An index of centrality with special reference to Somerset'. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 19 (1953), pp. 95 - 104.
J.E. Brush and H. E. Bracey, 'Rural service centres: South West Wisconsin and Southern England'. *Geographical Review* 45 (1955), pp. 559 - 569.
H.E. Bracey, *English central villages: Identification, distribution and functions.* Paper presented to International Geographical Union symposium in urban geography, 1960.
44. H.E. Bracey op cit. (1953) (Footnote 43).
45. A. Blowers, op cit. (Footnote 13).
46. G.D. Mitchell, op cit (Footnote 36).

47. J. Saville, *Rural depopulation in England and Wales, 1851 - 1951*. (1957), pp. 172 - 247.

48. Devon County Council, *First review of the County Development Plan: Analysis of the survey*. (1964), p. 46.

49. Devon County Council, *Second review of the County Development Plan: Analysis of the survey*. (1970).

50. D.W. Lloyd, 'Rural planning'. *Journal of the Town Planning Institute* 44, (1958), pp. 245 - 247.

51. Work published by individual members of the department includes;

R.J. Green, 'The remote countryside, a plan for contraction', *Planning Outlook* 1 (1966), pp. 17 - 37.

R.J. Green and J.B. Ayton, op cit (Footnote 12).

R.J. Green, op cit (Footnote 16).

52. Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely County Council, *Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely County Development Plan revision: Report of survey*. (1968).

53. Most research on instituting decline in small settlements has been credited to the Norfolk County Planning Department. See for example,

R.J. Green, op cit (Footnote 51) (1966). Also;

R.I. Maxwell, *The Dying village*. A report to the Norfolk Countryside Sub Committee. (1968).

In addition John Saville's study of South Hams in Devon (foot-note 47) concluded that accelerated decline in some small villages was necessary.

54. Isle of Wight County Council, *First review of the County Development Plan: Report of survey*. (1962).
55. Devon County Council, *op cit.* (1964 and 1970) (Footnote 48 and 49).
56. Huntingdonshire County Council, *Rural settlement planning policy*. (1972).
57. Norfolk County Council, *Interim settlement policy*. (1974). Also; Norfolk County Council, *Norfolk joint structure plan: Issues and possibilities*. By the Norfolk Joint Structure Plan Steering Committee. (1974), pp. 106 - 105.
58. Development Commissioners, *Aspects of rural development*. 32nd report of the Development Commissioners for the three years ended 31st March. 1965. (1966).
59. HMSO., *A strategy for rural Wales*. (1971), pp. 27 - 29. Also; HMSO., *Mid Wales: The growth town programmes*. (1973), pp. 5 - 7.
60. J.G. Thomas, 'Population change and the provision of services', in J.Ashton and W.H. Long, *The remoter rural areas of Britain*. (1972) pp. 91 - 106.

61. R. Urwin, *Second report to the Greater London Regional Planning Committee*. (1933).
62. For an explanation of the conforming and non-conforming land use terms see,
 D. Thomas, 'Problems of planning the rural urban fringe'.
Geographia Polonica 24 (1972), pp. 81 - 94. Also;
 D. Thomas, *Londons green belt*. (1970).
63. Ministry of Housing and Local Government, *Circular No. 42/55* (1955) paragraphs 4 and 5.
64. A. Thorburn, 'The new village'. *Official Architecture and Planning* 29 (1966), pp. 1529 - 1534.
65. Anon, 'Bar Hill village, Cambridgeshire'. *Official Architecture and Planning* 29 (1966), pp. 1508 - 1514.
66. Span Developments Ltd. *New Ash Green: A new village near Hartley, Kent*. (1965).
67. Anon. 'Marks Tey new village, Essex'. *Official Architecture and Planning* 29 (1966), pp. 1517 - 1518.
68. Anon, 'Rushbrook village, Suffolk'. *Official Architecture and Planning* 29 (1966), pp. 1504 - 1507.
69. Field trips to New Ash Green (14 August, 1974) and to Bar Hill (28 September, 1974) indicate that standards of shop and service provision are lower than in natural settlements of a similar size.

This is examined in detail in Appendix 2.

70. The report of town planning consultants Shankland, Cox and associates, *Development potential in rural Bedfordshire* (1972), suggests that the demand for new housing in rural Bedfordshire should be accommodated in a range of new villages. Facilities were also to be concentrated onto these settlements. The Bedfordshire County Planning Department has made no moves towards implementing these proposals.

71. G. Smart, *Rural planning in the context of the city region*. A paper presented to the Town and Country Planning summer school. University of Manchester, 1968. See pp. 34 - 38 in the report of the summer school.

72. G.P. Wibberley, 'Rural planning in Britain: Protection or development'. *Journal of the Town Planning Institute* 56 (1970), pp. 285 - 288.

73. E.H. Doubleday, 'To plan or not to plan'. *Town and Country Planning* 30 (1962), pp. 331 - 335.

74. The report of the Norfolk Joint Structure Plan Steering Committee, (Issues and possibilities. op cit footnote 57) shows that the county planning department were considering a more liberal spread of development over the country. The principle motivation behind this was the desire to preserve many of the small villages in the county (nearly three quarters of the villages in Norfolk have populations of less than five hundred people). It was considered that development spread, despite its more obvious practical deficiencies, might provide a method for re-invigorating these decaying communities.

The report of the Steering Committee indicated that more information was needed to review the relative merits of policies of selected village development and of development spread. The County Planning Department has not yet finalised their conclusions on the application of a policy of development spread in the county. However, an interview with one of the planning officers in the department on 29 May, 1975 indicated that the development in the county will still be guided on the basis of a selected village development policy. It seems that a review of the principle of development spread suggested that this would only benefit a limited number of small villages and that it would lead to a real decline in the standards of service provision.

Table 3.1 : A comparison of the increase in the number of applications for planning permission in relation to population change in remote and pressure areas

REMOTE RURAL AREAS

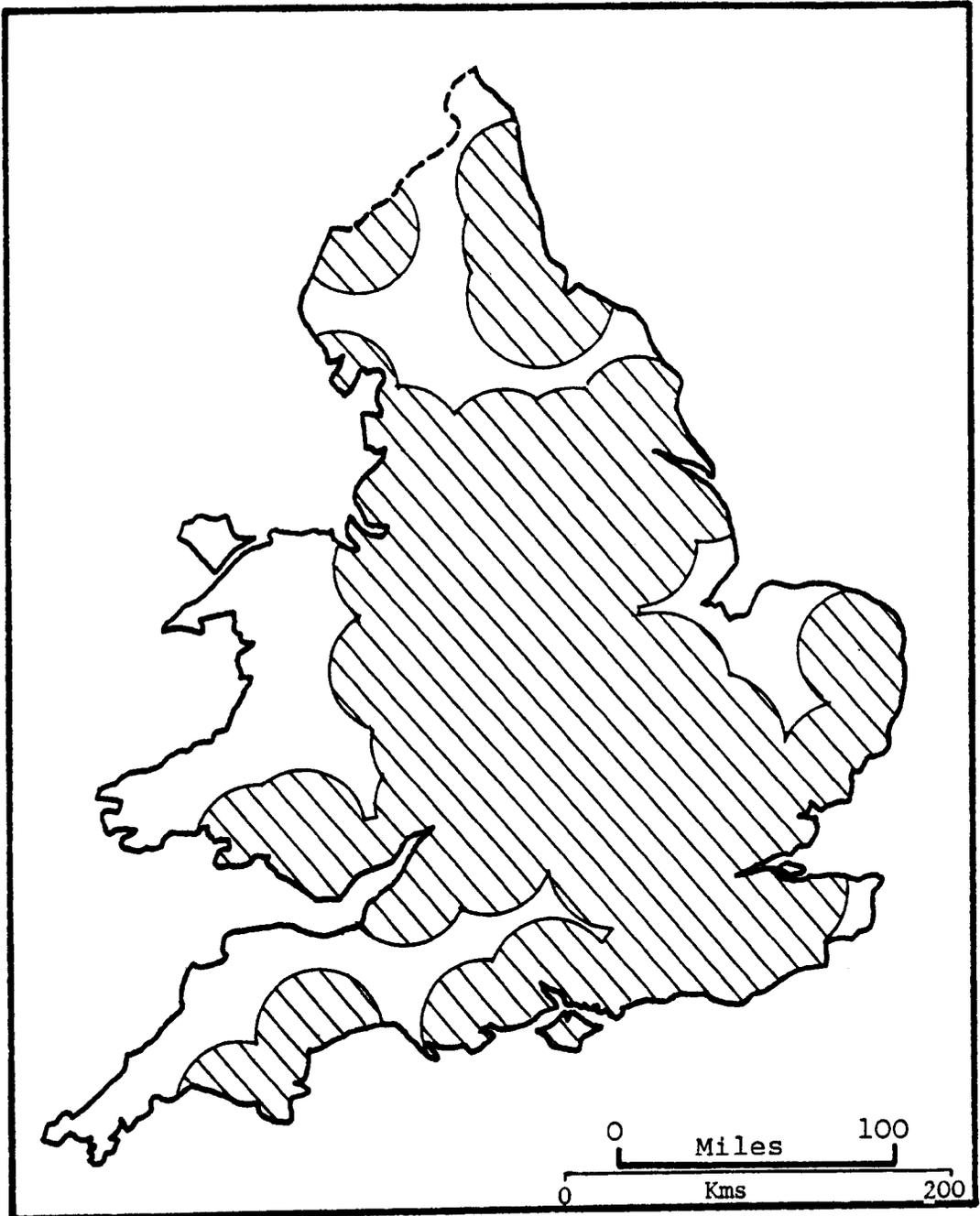
County	Increase in the number of applications, 1960-62	Increase in population, 1960-62
Norfolk	11.1%	1.0%
W.Suffolk	23.9%	2.6%
Shropshire	18.9%	1.3%

PRESSURE RURAL AREAS

County	Increase in the number of applications, 1960-62	Increase in population, 1960-62
Essex	16.4%	2.8%
Hampshire	0.7%	2.9%
Hertfordshire	13.8%	6.3%

Source : R.Turton, 'Towards a rural planning policy'. *Journal of the Town Planning Institute* 50 (1964), pp.142-144.

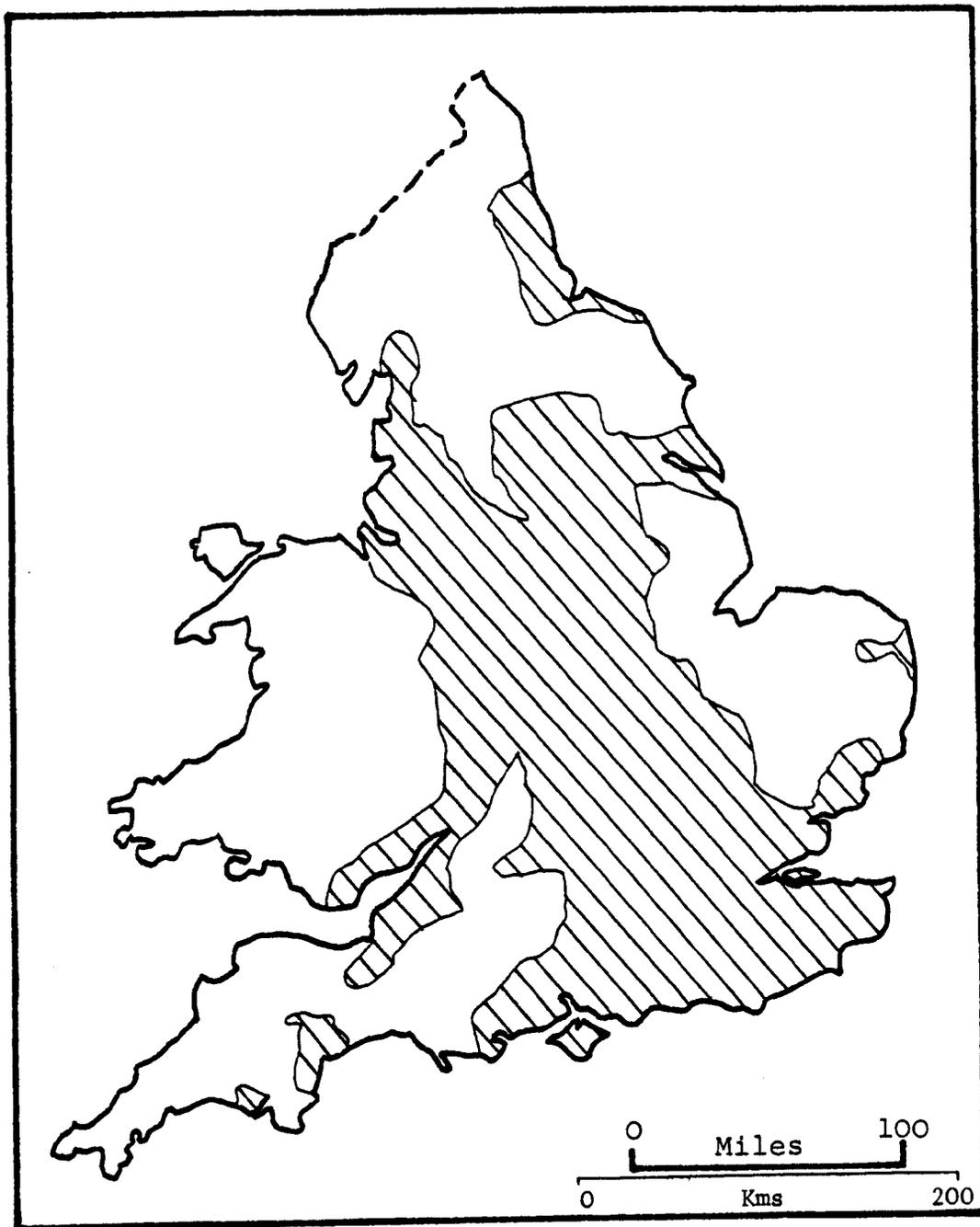
Figure 3.1 : The pressure areas of England and Wales as identified in a government planning bulletin



The pressure areas

Source : HMSO, *Settlement in the countryside* Government Planning Bulletin No.8. Ministry of Housing and Local Government (1967)

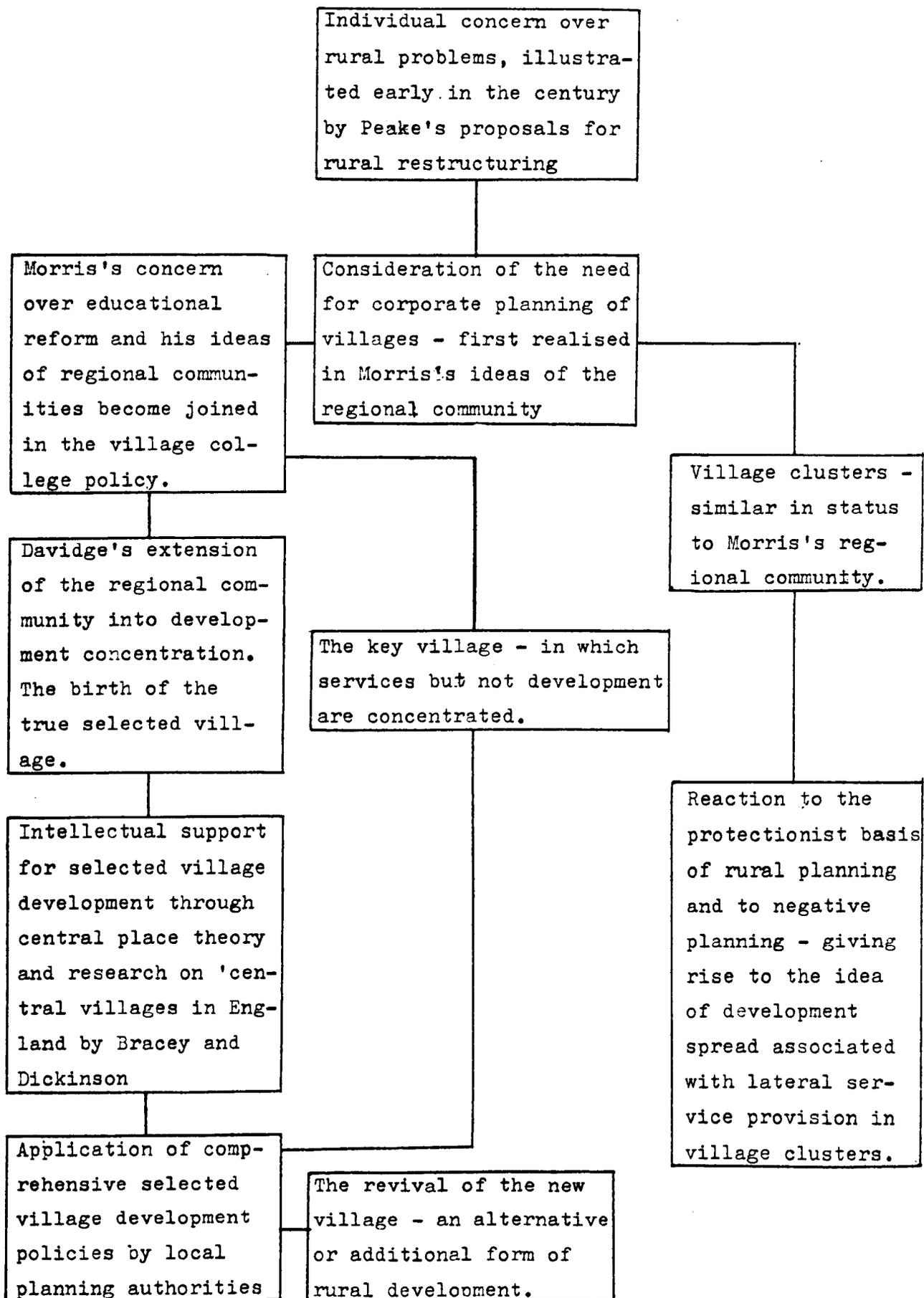
Figure 3.2 : An interpretation of the pressure areas of England and Wales based on 1961 - 1971 population change



The pressure areas

Source : A.Thorburn, *Planning villages* (1971).

Figure 3.3 The conceptual development of rural settlement planning.



THE PLANNING OF RURAL SETTLEMENT IN PRACTICE4.1 Introduction

The modern system of town and country planning in England has three constituent parts:

- (a) A professional component.
- (b) A legal component.
- (c) A political component.

The professional basis of planning was recognised, rather belatedly, in 1959 when the Town Planning Institute, then a limited company, was granted a royal charter. Planning, however, was a profession long before this, and Cherry ¹ has traced its origins back to the second decade of this century. Certainly by the beginning of the 'fifties and arguably much earlier, planners had established a broad basis of knowledge and expertise, and had also developed a professional self-consciousness. Furthermore, the profession became increasingly recognised as such by both the public and more significantly, by other professions. The royal charter did little more than institutionalise this development.

As a professional body planners hold their own values and beliefs. There is a good deal of discussion and controversy within the ranks of the profession over many of these standards, but it is important to recognise that such standards do exist. It is equally important to realise that ethics of planning may sometimes be at variance with the legal or political basis.

Planning law is now a very complex amalgamation of past and present legislation. Since the end of the Second World War there have been eight Town and Country Planning Acts. The last major revision was the Town and Country Planning Act, 1971, which forms the basis of modern legislation, but various sections of all the other Acts have been retained. This, of course, is common practice in English law, but the system of the 1971 Act, plus various sections of the otherwise repealed previous Acts, is further complicated by a mass of related legislation. This ranges from the remaining statute sections of The Metropolitan Commons Act of 1866 to more contemporary legislation such as the Highways Act, 1971, and the Land Compensation Act, 1973 . In all there are more than fifty different Acts which constitute modern planning law (see Table 4.1).

In addition to the statutes there are numerous orders and regulations issued by various Ministries. Whilst these are not legislation they do play an important part in regulating planning policy and decisions (this was illustrated in Chapter Three in the discussion of the significance of Ministerial circular No. 45/55 in the development of Green Belt policies).

The third component of modern planning is political. Policies and decisions are formulated, approved or rejected within an administrative framework that is political, whether it is at central or at local government level. In this context it would be unrealistic to say that planning did not have a political component, but there are wider implications of this political basis which are not usually recognised. Ardill has probably best summarised this:

"For planning is fundamentally a political matter. It is an expression in physical terms of ideas about society. The planning style of any Minister reflects his political philosophy and its interaction with the pressure exerted by his colleagues in the Government, the Opposition and a host of public and private interests. The same is true at the level of the local planning authority where the final word rests with elected representatives".²

'Party' politics also influence policy and decisions. This is true at both the level of central and local government. In perspective, however, most planning decisions are made without any direct reference to party politics. Generally it is the bigger or more controversial issues which are influenced by this element of politics. For example, a political conflict is unlikely to emerge over a simple planning application to extend a house, but will quite possibly occur in a planning decision relating to the development of an industrial estate on farmland.

Planning in practice is very complex. It would be unrealistic to consider the impact of planning on English rural settlement without understanding the processes involved in the system. However, the interaction of the professional, legal and political components produces a situation which is difficult to review both briefly and adequately at the same time. Consequently, the following discussion is longer than might at first sight seem necessary in a geographical study. Nonetheless, this is still a very simple inspection of the system of planning in practice. For more detailed studies see in particular Cullingworth³ or Ardill⁴.

4.2 The administrative structure of modern planning

The geographical structure of government in England comprises four levels: the state; metropolitan counties and counties; districts; and parishes. The structure of planning in this country introduces a further level, the region. Of these five levels only one, the parish, exercises no active planning function. The role of the parish within the planning framework is limited to an advisory capacity and this is very restricted. The 1972 Local Government Act stipulated that parish councils have the right to be informed of planning decisions relating to their area. No legislation gives parish councils the right to be involved in the making of planning decisions. Having stated the legal position of the parish council it is only fair to add that communication between the local planning authority and the parish is often a valuable channel for local information. The Town and Country Planning Acts of 1968 and 1971 demand that planning authorities must make attempts to ascertain public opinion when formulating plans. In this context the parish councils can be an important source of local opinion. Besides this restricted advisory role the parish council becomes involved in the planning process in only one other context, issues of public rights of way. The network of country footpaths is very complex and only administration at the local level (i.e. the parish council) has anything approaching a complete knowledge of the network. This feature was recognised in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949 which stated that a county map of public rights of way should be drawn up and that parish councils should be consulted in this process. This is the only situation in which parish councils have a legal right to be consulted on a matter of country planning.

Practical planning power in England lies with the district and county (including the metropolitan county) authorities. These are the units which are responsible for the formulation of local and county policy and for planning decisions on most aspects of development control. However, these local planning authorities are not autonomous. Planning law allows for the state, represented by the Department of the Environment, to oversee all local planning matters. Consequently, in practice central government exercises considerable latent power in all planning matters.

4.3 The role of central government

Before 1970 planning authority within central government was associated with several different bodies. Throughout the 'fifties town and country planning was principally the responsibility of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, the central government department was also responsible (as its name suggests) for housing and a range of local government services. However, although this was the principal state authority it was not the only one. The Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works had extensive planning responsibilities. In addition, the Ministry of Land and Natural Resources created in April, 1975, assumed certain of the planning responsibilities of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government. However, the machinery of central government can alter at a remarkable rate and the responsibilities of the Ministry of Land and Natural Resources were transferred back to the old Ministry when the new department was disbanded in February, 1967, less than two years after it was established. The situation was further complicated in October, 1964, when the Department of Economic Affairs was created. This was responsible for the regional economic

planning system. This department was of rather longer life, lasting until October, 1969. Finally, the Board of Trade has responsibility for Industrial Development Certificates, which is an important component in the regional planning process.

Planning responsibility within central government was thus fragmented. In October, 1969, the Labour administration went a step towards consolidation of state responsibility with the establishment of the post of Secretary of State for Local Government and Regional Planning. But this organisation of central government functions had a life of only one year before the Conservative administration (elected June, 1970) took the process one step further with the establishment of the Department of the Environment. As far as we are concerned virtually all planning functions of central government are now focussed on this one department.

The Secretary of State for the Environment is charged with the duty of 'securing consistency and continuity in the framing of national policy with respect to the use and development of land'⁵. In connection with this the Secretary of State has very wide powers which in effect give the Department of the Environment (DoE) the final say in all policy matters, although subject to Parliamentary control.

There are several ways in which central government can influence rural settlement planning. Firstly, all county structure plans must be approved by the Secretary of State, As these plans establish the framework for the planning of all settlements, this is obviously an important potential influence in planning villages,

Secondly, the DoE, like its predecessors is responsible for framing not only new planning legislation but also a variety of regulations. These regulations are often as important as the legislation itself in the practical operation of planning controls. The General Development Order and the Use Classes Order constitute a good example of this. Broadly the current planning legislation establishes that all development is subject to the granting of planning permission by the local planning authority. However, it is the Use Classes Order and the General Development Order which, respectively, define what is not classed as development and which development does not require planning permission (for example ancillary agricultural buildings).

Another way in which the Secretary of State can influence the planning of rural settlement is by 'calling in' either a local plan or any application for permission to develop, if it is considered that an important question of principle or public interest is at stake. The DoE inspectors then decide the outcome of the application, often through an inquiry.

The usual means by which the DoE can influence local planning matters is by deciding planning appeals. If an application for development is refused by the local planning authority or is given conditional approval then the applicant has the right to appeal to the Secretary of State for a review of the decision. In 1970 there were 414,301 applications⁶ for planning permission in England and Wales; 62,677 of these were refused and many of those that were approved were subject to conditions. This led to 5,786 appeals being decided by the DoE and of these 1,578 or over a quarter (27.3 per cent), were allowed. Numerically, then, only a small proportion

of approvals are granted by the DoE (in 1970 only 1,578 out of 353,202), but the impact of the central government is greater than this would suggest. Generally it is the larger proposals for development which are taken to the appeal stage. In addition, most of the applications granted by the local authorities are for small developments (single buildings or extensions onto existing property, for example). Consequently, a significantly larger proportion (although in perspective this is still relatively small) of large scale developments are in effect given permission by the DoE and not by the local planning authority.

The impact of central government on village planning is difficult to measure. There are a number of ways in which the DoE can influence the planning of rural settlement in England but it is only comparatively rarely that village development is a result of direct action by the DoE. Nonetheless, it is important to realise that direct action can and does occur. The village of Southwater in Sussex provides a good example of this. In November, 1969, West Sussex County Planning Department published a village plan for Southwater ⁷. This is a large village with about two and a half thousand people ⁸. Figure 4.1 shows that there is considerable scope for additional development in the village. The 1969 village plan recognised this but saw two limitations to immediate development. Firstly the village has very poor facilities. This is largely a product of the fairly recent expansion of the settlement. As late as the latter half of the nineteenth century settlement in the parish consisted of dispersed farms and a small nucleation around a coaching inn ⁹. Consequently the village has few traditional retail or service functions, and the proximity of the market town of Horsham

(four miles away) has acted as a disincentive to the development of new facilities. Secondly, Southwater lies on the busy A.24. The planning report stated that it would be inadvisable to congest this road further by expanding the village. The village plan proposed the development of a shopping centre in the village and a higher priority for the scheduled village bypass. Until both of these proposals were completed the plan suggested that large scale developments would be inappropriate. In 1970 Federated Homes Ltd. applied for permission to develop a large area of woodland and coppice on the south-western fringe of the village. The area had not been scheduled for development in the local plan. In keeping with the provisions of the local plan the local planning authority refused permission, pointed out in addition that the proposed residential estate would lie within the pollution zone of the Redland Brickworks plant in the centre of the village. Federated Homes Ltd. applied to the DoE for a reversal of the decision. At the appeal stage the DoE granted permission despite objections from the local planning authority.

This example is not meant to imply that the impact of direct action by the DoE on villages is usually adverse to the best interest of the village community. There are other complex reasons explaining the DoE decision on what is now the College Wood Estate at Southwater¹⁰. Nonetheless, this example does show that central government can have considerable influence and impact on village development. The College Wood Estate is shown in Plate 4.1.



Plate 4.1 Woodlands Way, Southwater (Sussex)

An example of the physical ~~impact~~ of direct central government influence in village development. In 1970 an application to build a large housing estate on the former College Wood, was rejected by the local planning authority. This decision was subsequently reversed by the DoE when the applicant, Federated Homes Ltd., appealed to the Secretary of State. Such reversals of primary decisions are not uncommon, and some may result in development far more extensive than this example (although the photograph shows only a part of the whole development). A more detailed examination of the decision to over-rule the local decision indicates that political factors internal to the DoE may have been very important (see footnote). If this is the case, this is an example of a determinant of planning decisions whose significance is very difficult to objectively assess.

4.4 The influence of regional planning on English rural settlement

The largest planning unit with statutory powers to control development and to implement forward planning proposals in England, is the county. Some county authorities have produced joint plans termed sub-regional studies ¹¹, but since 1947 no group of authorities has banded together to form a cohesive regional unit with comprehensive powers. There is no machinery for regional physical planning in England.

Since 1964 there has been regional economic planning machinery. Eight regional economic planning councils have been established in England and each of these has produced at least one regional planning study for its area. Cullingworth has described these studies as 'regional stocktaking' ¹². Regional planning studies are generally concerned with economic problems: employment, incomes, communications, the decayed environment, migration, and the location of investment in relation to the re-invigoration or re-structuring of regional economies. On the face of it these broad issues are unlikely to have any major effect on individual villages. Nevertheless, regional economic planning can have an impact on general development policies relating to rural settlement.

Regional policies as an effective tool in the planning of rural settlement, are clearly shown in the more remote rural regions. The Scottish Highlands is probably the best example in the United Kingdom; the impact of policies exercised by the Highlands and Islands Development Board on rural settlement is in some cases notable ¹³. Within England the impact is less direct. The twenty-one settlements classed as new towns in England have been estab-

lished under regional policies and each has an effect on surrounding rural settlement ¹⁴. The expanded towns created under the 1952 Town Development Act may have a similar impact, allowing for the fact that many already acted as shopping and service centres for a rural area. In the less prosperous regions public policy responses through the framework of the Special Development Areas, development areas and the Intermediate Areas has provided new employment opportunities for rural and urban residents ¹⁵. Otherwise regional policies show a distinct emphasis on the more pressing economic problems of the industrial and urban areas. Rural settlement may not be ignored, but it often does not receive the attention which it merits.

The impact of regional policies on rural settlement is a complex topic which has only been reviewed in the briefest detail here. There is a need for more research on this relationship. This might be related to the need for both a larger planning unit than the county and for comprehensive planning of rural areas ¹⁶, possibly on revised lines similar to the much maligned concept of the 'Rural Development Board' ¹⁷ (this will be discussed at more length in Chapter 13).

4.5 County and District: The local planning authorities

The structure of counties and districts as local planning authorities has changed quite considerably since 1947. This has happened through a spatial reorganisation of local government and by a transfer of some planning functions from county to district authorities. These changes were a result of the Local Government Act of 1972.

The Town and Country Planning Act, 1947 established that the local planning authorities in England and Wales were the counties and county boroughs. Modern planning law makes a distinction between local authorities and local planning authorities. All local authorities have the right to acquire land, to develop land and to make land available to others for planning purposes, but only those which are also local planning authorities can make development plans, grant or reject planning applications, and enforce planning controls. This is an important distinction. Legislation prior to 1947 made the county district authorities (i.e. the Municipal Boroughs, Urban and Rural Districts) the local planning authorities. Consequently, the 1947 Act effectively deprived the district authorities of active planning power.

In practice, however, many of the district authorities retained some planning functions after 1947. Broadly there were advantages in planning being operated at both levels of authority. Clearly the wide planning functions instituted by the 1947 Act required a large authority (both in terms of the area covered and the resident population) to exercise them adequately. In this context the county authority was most suitable. In addition county authorities were able to plan more comprehensively than districts by balancing urban and rural conflict on major planning issues. Counties were more able to negotiate with other planning authorities over regional issues such as population migration and arrangements for urban overspill. Last, but not least, the choice of the 141 county and county boroughs in England and Wales allowed for a more efficient distribution of the relatively few qualified planning staff than if the numerous district authorities (1,441 authorities in 1947¹⁸) had

continued as the local planning authorities.

There were also advantages in the district authorities being allowed to exercise planning powers. These had greater opportunities for a fuller knowledge of local conditions and needs, more access to the electorate and they were also better placed to encourage citizen participation (a factor which became very important in the later transfer of responsibilities). In addition the redistribution of responsibilities by the 1947 Act had become a major grievance of the district authorities and had contributed to considerable hostility between the two levels of local government¹⁹.

Many county and county borough authorities compromised in this situation by delegating some planning functions to the district authorities. Delegation was more common in the urban than rural areas but nonetheless many of the larger, more populous rural district authorities exercised delegated planning powers.

The actual degree of delegation varied from one authority to the next. Generally those rural authorities which possessed delegated powers were restricted to practising some elements of development control. Often simple applications (for example for house extensions) were decided by the district authority. Always, however, the county had executive authority. In the late fifties central government, realising the political expediency and practical advantages of delegation, encouraged some redistribution of local government powers. The Local Government Act, 1958, established a framework for some redistribution of powers in other services as well as planning. This had considerable effect on many of the

Urban and Municipal Districts, but less impact on rural districts. Many rural district authorities had neither the desire for delegation or the resources to employ technical staff to exercise delegated functions.

The 1972 Local Government Act has taken delegation one step further. For many of the ^{Boroughs} Municipal and Urban Districts and for most of the rural districts this Act did more than just institutionalise trends towards the delegation of planning powers; it actually extended them. Under the present system the new district authorities are responsible for virtually all development control and also for the formulation of whatever local plans that they or the county authorities consider to be necessary. The county authorities are responsible for the county structure plan and for formulating a 'development plan scheme' which describes the number and kind of local plan needed to fill out the structure plan. In special cases the county authorities are also responsible for producing the more important local plans.

Consequently, under the 1972 Act both the county councils and district councils are the local planning authorities, with separate but related functions. In fact the separation of functions is ill-defined in the Act. This is partly because the functions of the two authorities are seen to be overlapping in respect of some of the responsibilities, for example, local plans, but in practice the lack of definition is often confusing. There is evidence in some of the counties of which the author has experience that old county/district hostilities are being perpetuated by conflict over where the responsibilities of the districts end and where those of the county start.

This may lead to considerable problems in the near future and possibly to new legislation or memoranda that redefine the boundaries of responsibility (see Table 4.2 for a full definition of the responsibilities of county and district planning authorities).

The reorganisation of local government brought about by the 1972 Local Government Act represented a political decentralisation of planning responsibilities. This was instituted on 1st April, 1974. At the same time the structure of local government and its spatial pattern was modified and this had important consequences for the actual decentralisation of planning powers. Under the old local government system there were 145 separate planning authorities in England and Wales. The new system formed 422 local planning authorities (fifty-three counties and 369 district authorities; for a full breakdown see figure 4.2). This represents an increase in the number of authorities classed as local planning authorities. However, under the old system there were also many municipal authorities and urban district authorities and some of the more populous rural district authorities exercising delegated planning powers. In this context the actual number of authorities exercising planning functions is, at the worst, about the same as before reorganisation and may well be less. This element of reorganisation is probably more true for urban local government than for rural. In the remoter rural areas in particular, where few of the old authorities exercised any real delegated powers under the old system, there has usually been a more complete decentralisation of planning powers.

4.6 Professionalism in the decision making process

The internal political structure of local government in England is focussed on a system whereby professional officers and their assistants, are responsible for the routine administration of duties but 'non professional' elected council members are responsible for policy decisions. Despite the democratic appeal of this system one wonders if in the highly technical matter of planning, those who are technically more qualified should have greater independence in decision making (there are parallels for this in Social Services).

The actual decision making structure in local government varies from one authority to the next. Broadly the consideration of planning applications, the formulation of plans and other routine planning duties are undertaken by the planning staff. In the case of plans these must be approved by the 'planning committee' of the authority (composed of elected representatives) before they are either implemented by the planning department or submitted to the DoE for final approval. With development applications the planning officer responsible makes a recommendation to the planning committee as to the suggested course of action but it is the committee and not the officer who makes the decision on whether to permit the application or not ²⁰.

This is the general system but the actual decision making process in planning is intricate and the complexities often give planning officers quite considerable power. In many authorities the planning officers are given the right to make decisions without reference to the planning committee when considering applications for some types of development. Even when an application goes to the

committee for a ruling, the recommendation of the officer is often accepted (both through deference to the officer's knowledge and due to pressure of work within many committees).

The same structure is repeated at central government level. Professional officers of the DoE recommend a course of action to the Secretary of State and he usually accepts this ²¹.

The flexibility of the decision making process allows the professionals, the planning officers, considerable influence and a measure of effective power. This should not be overstressed. A study of slum demolition in the Millfield area of Sunderland by Dennis ²² has shown how local party politics can influence planning decisions. The example of Southwater in Sussex given earlier in this chapter shows how national political philosophies can affect the development of some villages. In addition one cannot ignore the distinct possibility that officers when recommending a course of action to a planning committee, take into consideration the planning attitudes of that committee, which the officer may be well aware of from past experience.

The *Management study on development control* ²³ found that seventy per-cent of planning applications were of 'a simple nature'. On decisions relating to such applications the system of local government allows planning officers considerable scope. On the larger, more complex or controversial applications and on many issues of policy there is a tendency for planning committees to see these not as technical matters to be solved by the professionals but as

political issues to be solved by politicians. This substantially reflects an accurate view of the English system of planning; whether it is desirable or not is another matter. There are both advantages and disadvantages in this structure of decision making in local government. We cannot consider these here, but in this context Cullingworths' call for an Ombudsman for local government ²⁴ is becoming increasingly weighty.

4.7 Development plans and the plan making machinery

Development plans are the general framework of policies and proposals within which applications for planning permission are considered. Development control is the principal tool of town and country planning but this would be of little value without a more general planning perspective. It is development plans which fulfil this function.

Development plans were changed fundamentally by the 1968 Town and Country Planning Act. Before this Act the planning of rural areas within a county was guided by a single plan, the 'county development plan', which was both inflexible and, due to a cumbersome and unwieldy bureaucratic system, usually out-dated by rapid social and economic changes affecting a given area. The 1947 Town and Country Planning Act established that all county authorities should prepare a county development plan. This was to be a county map on a scale of one inch to a mile, showing the 'disposition of land uses expected to materialise within a twenty year period'. Rural land within the area covered by the map usually had few proposals and was consequently expected to maintain the same land uses for the whole period of the plan. With hindsight this can be seen as a rather

negative and inflexible approach.

The 1947 Act stipulated that planning authorities were to forward the county development plan and accompanying written statement to the Minister of Housing and Local Government by June 1st, 1951, for approval. In fact, only twenty-two authorities (out of 145) managed to reach this deadline. Most of the remainder had presented their plans to the Minister by the mid fifties. Generally rural authorities through their more limited resources presented later than urban authorities but this was not always the case ²⁵. The 1947 Act also stipulated that the county development plan was to be reviewed every five years and this review was also to be submitted to the Minister for approval. In practice most authorities were able to formulate only one review up until the mid-sixties.

The negative aspect of most rural planning, the inflexibility and the cumbersome preparation of county development plans and reviews was criticised by Brett in his notable study of rural planning in Oxfordshire, *Landscape in distress* ²⁶. There was further criticism of the county development plan principle from within the planning profession ²⁷. In May, 1964, the Minister of Housing and Local Government established the Planning Advisory Group to review aspects of the development plan system. Their report ²⁸, published a year later, recommended extensive changes. The specific recommendations of the group were largely duplicated in the provisions of the 1968 Town and Country Planning Act.

The present system of plans, as established by the 1968 Act, does not seem to suffer from the drawbacks of the old county devel-

opment plan. Broadly, the Act introduces two types of plan. The structure plan is prepared for the whole of the administrative area of each county, but in addition separate structure plans may be prepared for large urban areas within each county. The plan is a written statement of the main proposals for structural change within its area over a period of twenty to thirty years. The definition of structure in this context is "The social, economic and physical systems of an area, so far as they are the subject of planning control or influence" ²⁹.

There are a number of important differences between the structure plan and its predecessor, the county development plan:

- (a) The structure plans has a wider brief than the county development plan which was usually concerned with physical elements alone.
- (b) The structure plan is a written statement which is supported by various diagrams illustrating the geographical context of the proposals but which are not maps in the strict sense. In contrast the county development plan was a map supported by a written statement.
- (c) The structure plan is the subject of a continuous updating process unlike the old county development plan which was assessed and revised by quinquennial reviews (in theory at least).

The structure plan does seem to over-come the three principal drawbacks of the old system: negative planning (in most rural areas)

inflexibility, and a cumbersome review process. The success of the new system in the rural context can only be judged by results and as yet few structure plans have been implemented. Many authorities, at the time of writing, have not yet presented their structure plans to the DoE for approval. Others are waiting the decision of the Secretary of State at the DoE.

The second type of plan introduced by the 1968 Act is the 'local plan'. This is a collective term for three types of plan. These are more often prepared by the district than county authorities.

(a) District plans. These are concerned with detailed planning proposals for part of an area covered by a structure plan. They may cover a rural area or the whole of a medium sized town. Their content is similar to the old development plans. District plans are prepared by district planning authorities.

(b) Action plans. For comprehensive planning of areas that are indicated in the structure plan for improvement, new development or for redevelopment. These are usually urban plans and are generally prepared by district authorities.

(c) Subject plans. These are intended to deal with one aspect of planning. A good example would be a proposed major transport route such as an inter-urban motorway. These may be prepared by either district or county authorities.

Local plans are thus detailed examinations of either specific areas covered by a structure plan, or of specific proposals made in the structure plan. Local plans can be prepared by both district and county authorities. Whilst such plans need the ratification of the relevant planning committee of local government they do not normally need the approval of the Secretary of State. The only criticism of the local plan system, within the context of rural settlement planning, is that there is no obvious 'slot' into which the preparation of village plans can fit. Since the early 'sixties there has been increasing awareness of the need for plans on the level of individual villages. Most authorities with large numbers of villages within their administrative area have prepared several of these, although usually only for the larger villages and small towns, villages scheduled for large scale development and conservation villages. The nature of the plans varies considerably from short individual policy statements such as in the former county of Huntingdonshire and Peterborough³⁰, and in Cheshire³¹, to detailed village maps with supporting written statements (usually issued as individual village reports) such as in West Sussex³². The more comprehensive village plans are usually commendable planning studies but all have suffered from the drawback that they have only an advisory capacity in relation to the planning of their respective villages³³. The local plan machinery offers an opportunity for statutory village plans but as there is not clearly defined place for them as local plans it remains to be seen whether any local authority is prepared to take an initiative on this point.

4.8 Village categorisation

The concept of selected village development is implemented by most planning authorities by a process of 'village categorisation' as defined in relevant plans. Not all county authorities define villages in terms of various planning categories³⁴ but the great majority do.

At the most basic level the concept of selected village development creates two village categories: those settlements that will act as growth points for development and as rural service centres, and other settlements in which development will either be forbidden or discouraged. Village categorisation simply takes this subdivision one step further by defining several classes of village. Each village class has a general development policy applied to it and this then acts as the guideline for each constituent settlement. Village categorisation is a planning response to selected village development brought about by practical complexities in the nature of English villages (the mechanics of the system are considered in detail in Chapter Seven).

Some villages can clearly be classed as selected centres. In practice these are often small existing or former market towns, others are simply large villages which support many facilities. In either case they are seen to have 'spare development capacity' or room for new development. In addition they often have an extensive range of shopping and service facilities and can function as rural centres for surrounding smaller villages and hamlets with few facilities. Many other villages have obvious potential for development but few facilities. Medium sized villages of between about five

hundred and two thousand population commonly fall into this group. Such villages often fill one of the pre-requisites for selection as a growth centre (i.e. spare development capacity) but not the second (i.e. facilities capable of allowing the village to function as a rural service centre). With the accepted need for new housing that exists in England it would be very irresponsible not to tap the spare development capacity that exists in such villages, so the need for a village category which allows for some expansion or growth whilst not conferring the status of a rural service centre, is apparent. Many authorities call this village category 'minor growth villages', whilst true selected villages which also function as rural service centres are 'major growth villages'. The situation is further complicated by the need to preserve the visual amenity of the more attractive villages and hamlets. These villages are usually termed 'conservation villages' and there is very strict control of development, in principle, in these settlements. Green belts introduce a third complication to village selection. Some settlements within green belts are suitable for selection as major growth villages but green belt restrictions on new development modify their planning status.

In practice the actual system of categorisation adopted by different planning authorities is largely a reflection of the distribution and character of rural settlement in the administrative area. There are several other important elements which influence the nature of categorisation policies: the location of villages relative to urban centres; the distribution and size of urban centres in the area and the capacity of these centres to act as foci for the shopping, service, recreational and employment demands of

surrounding village populations; the distribution of public utilities within the area (notably mains sewerage facilities); the extent and direction of urban overspill pressures on villages; and the relative remoteness of the area. These are examined in more detail in Chapter Seven. There are also a variety of political influences the effects of which vary from one authority to another. The political outlook of local government in relation to elements such as rural deprivation, village conservation and rural development, influences not only planning policies and thereby proposals for categorisation but also a range of other local government services such as housing, social services and education. In return the policy of local government on these other services can have an effect on the categorisation of villages ³⁵.

Categorisation is therefore a complicated element in rural settlement planning. The processes involved are probably best illustrated by case studies. To this extent Chapter Seven examines in detail five examples of local authority policies.

An examination of the post-1947 policies of twenty-two county authorities ³⁶ shows that for many counties the idea of categorisation is relatively new.

The county development plans of the twenty-two sample counties were presented to the Minister between 1951 and 1958. Ten counties adopted a comprehensive policy of selected village development and all of these outlined a system of categorisation of villages. Of the twelve other authorities, three adopted a 'key' village policy, proposing to concentrate facilities in certain villages but not accompanying this with concentration of development in those villages.

There was no obvious inter-relationship between the counties with a village categorisation policy in their county development plans. Two of the counties were fairly heavily urbanised with considerable industrial development (Durham and Nottinghamshire). One other (Somerset) had a large urban centre (over 100,000 population). The remaining seven counties were, essentially, of a more rural character. The spatial distribution of these ten counties was remarkably even throughout the country. In addition, the respective county plans were all submitted over a fairly lengthy period. Consequently there was no obvious geographical or temporal diffusion process.

Most of these counties ³⁷ published reviews of their county development plans. The earliest was that of Hampshire (1961) and the last Northamptonshire, who published a specific review of county rural settlement policy in 1967. Five of the counties which had not embraced a comprehensive policy of selected development of villages did so at this review stage. These were Devon (see Chapter Three), Huntingdonshire, Kent, Northamptonshire and Wiltshire. As with the county development plans all of the new counties adopting this principle of village planning also introduced a policy of village categorisation at the review stage. By the mid-sixties seven of the twenty-two sample counties had as yet to implement either selected village development as a principle, or village categorisation.

In the late 'sixties and early 'seventies several English county authorities published special rural settlement policy reports. Seven of the sample county councils formulated such reports and several others made specific policy statements about rural settlements within their administrative areas. By means of such reports

or statements the remaining seven counties which by the review stage had still not implemented selected village development, did so. Six of these also established village categorisation policies. The exception is Hampshire. A policy statement by the county planning officer in March, 1969, established that the county planning department was following a policy of selected village development but to date no categorisation proposals have been published. It would seem that Hampshire County Planning Department prefer to adopt a more flexible attitude to village planning by relying not on policy statements for groups of villages but on plans prepared for many of the villages in the county.

Consequently, by the early 'seventies all of the twenty-two sample counties were following selected village development policies and all but one were manifesting this in village categorisation. Although some of the county authorities have been applying village categorisation proposals for twenty years none have rejected the idea up to the time of writing, in the light of experience. Many of the authorities have made minor alterations to their policies by modifying the policy statements relating to particular village categories. Many others have changed the grouping of individual villages. This can be seen as part of an improving process which reflects both the fallibility of planners and changes within individual villages.

4.9 The process of development control

Development control is often seen as part of the planning process which is beyond the comprehension of the layman. In principle at least, however, the operation of development control is

fairly simple. Figure 4.3 illustrates the basic process of development control.

The beginning of the process must be an application for planning permission to develop a given site, whether this is a farm on which a private developer proposes to build a large housing estate, or a small portion of a back garden on which the applicant proposes to build an extension to an existing house. Development is defined in planning law as 'the carrying out of building, engineering or mining or other operations in, on, over or under the land, or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land'. Any activity which falls within this definition, subject to the provisions of the General Development Order and the Use Classes Order, needs planning permission. The 1971 Town and Country Planning Act defines six activities which do not constitute development and which therefore do not require planning permission. Broadly, these are activities such as road maintenance, inspection of sewers and construction in an existing building that does not materially change the external appearance of the building. In addition, the 'Use Classes Order' defines certain changes in the function of buildings or land which do not need planning permission, for example changing the trade of a shop from, say, a shoe shop into a confectioners, as long as the new shop is not a 'noxious trade' such as a fish and chip shop or a pet shop. (NB. This does not cover any new building involved in the change of use.)

In addition to certain activities which do not require planning permission, there are others which are still defined as develop-

ment but which are granted automatic planning permission. These are defined under the twenty-three classes of the General Development Order'. These include many kinds of small improvements and extensions to existing houses and industrial premises. The erection of many kinds of agricultural buildings or buildings necessary for forestry is given automatic permission under the General Development Order. This in particular has caused many forms of 'undesirable' development in villages. As a result, article four of the order allows planning authorities to bring these permitted classes of development under its control. In practice this is rarely used. Many directions made under article four need the Secretary of States' approval; others (as one planning officer has described it to the author) are "torn to pieces" if they get as far as an appeal by an applicant.

The processing stage of a planning application involves a number of functions on the part of the local planning department, Consultations (with interested parties which may range from adjoining land owners of the proposed site of development, to the Highways Division of the DoE) are often necessary. Local press advertisements may be necessary. The application is considered in terms of various standards of building and planning. Finally relevant comments from interested parties must be considered and the application examined in the light of current policies and development plans. Eventually the planning officer concerned recommends a course of action to the planning committee of the local authority. The planning committee then makes its decision whether to refuse or grant permission and if permission is to be granted what, if any, conditions are to be made.

If an application is refused or is granted permission but subject to conditions, the applicant has the right to appeal against the decision. The appeal is decided by the Secretary of State either by written representations or by an Inspector of the DoE or through a public inquiry. In either case the decision of the Secretary of State (except in matters of planning law) is final.

4.10 Public participation in the planning process

Public participation is a relative innovation in the planning methodology. Planning law now stipulates that the public should be involved in many planning matters. This is not to suggest that public participation did not exist until very recently, but the new system makes a major advancement, so its significance is briefly considered here.

Statutory participation requirements were made in the 1968 Town and Country Planning Act. These required planning departments to take measures to ascertain public opinion on matters such as the county structure plan and on local plans. The report of the Skeffington Committee on public participation established many of the more obvious elements and the desirability of public involvement³⁸.

The principal basis of participation is that it is only the residents of a given area who are able to offer the local knowledge and feeling that are so vital to the planning decisions relating to that area. There are also political consequences and advantages. At present the system of planning in both urban and rural areas is related to decisions by committees who may pay no more than lip ser-

vice to public participation. Leaving aside any other issues there is a major problem in the partiality of planning committees.

Public participation is a potentially valuable addition to the planning framework. Thorns has noted its particular value for rural communities³⁹. Nevertheless various attempts at participation schemes by planning authorities have usually reflected the problem of public apathy. Most members of the public do not wish to or otherwise do not become involved in the schemes⁴⁰. This creates the additional problem that the views that are gained from participation schemes may represent a narrow viewpoint. The attitudes of those that do not become involved are as important as those of the people who do.

Participation results have generally been disappointing but this seems less a reason to abandon attempts than to try new approaches. As Cullingwoth⁴¹ has noted:

"The 1968 Planning Act represents a bold step towards a realignment of political forces in the field of town and country planning. If it succeeds it will not stop there".

4.11 Summary

This chapter examines the system of settlement planning in England. The administrative structure reflects four geographic levels: state; regions; metropolitan county/county; and district. The simple parish effectively has only an advisory function in the planning process.

Within central government it is the DoE which is the central authority for Town and Country Planning, although responsibility was formerly more fragmented at the national level. The Secretary of State at the DoE holds an executive authority over effectively all planning matters (with the notable exception of planning law), which is exercised through the DoE inspectorate.

Regions are associated only with economic planning policies since there is no machinery for regional 'physical' planning. Such policies, however, may have considerable impact on rural areas.

The practical operation of planning is focussed on the local planning authorities. Prior to the 1972 Local Government Act these were the county councils but that statute institutionalised pre-existing trends (in some areas) towards devolution of powers to the district authority. 'Grass roots' planning is now jointly exercised by county and district although legislation could be more precise as to the exact nature of their planning functions and separate responsibilities.

As a direct product of the democratic structure of local government it is non-professionals, the elected council members who are serving on the planning committee, which make planning decisions. The same is true, in principle, of planning at central government level in the DoE. In practice, however, planning officers may exercise considerable authority over planning decisions.

The principal mechanism of planning in this country is development control. This is examined in detail and a simple model is formulated. Development control is implemented within the context of a general, and sometimes also a more specific framework of development plans. This chapter examines the plans and plan making machinery after the 1947 Act and also the important revisions to the system introduced by the 1968 Act.

Selected village development is implemented by most planning authorities through a system of settlement categorisation which produces selected and 'non-selected' settlements, and various sub-categories. This chapter (together with Chapter Seven) examines the operation of the system in detail.

Potentially one of the most significant recent introductions to the planning system is public participation. This chapter examines the statutory requirement for participation and suggests that in many authorities local apathy is encouraging only 'lip service' to this requirement.

FOOTNOTES

1. G. Cherry, *The evolution of British town planning* (1974), pp. 251 - 55.
2. J. Ardill, *The new citizens guide to town and country planning* (1974), p. 14.
3. J.B. Cullingworth, *Town and country planning in Britain* (4th ed., 1972).
4. J. Ardill, op cit, (footnote 2).
5. J. B. Cullingworth, op cit, (footnote 3), pp. 50 - 51.
6. J. Ardill, op cit, (footnote 3), p. 109.
7. West Sussex County Council, *Southwater village plan*. County planning department (1969).
8. Unlike most large villages, Southwater is not a separate civil parish in the Registrar General's census data, and consequently there are no precise figures for the population of the village. However, a survey of the village in 1969 by the West Sussex County Planning Department enumerated a total of 797 households. This would indicate a population in the order of two and a half thousand people in the village.
9. D.J. Parsons, 'The colonisation of the Low Weald: The example of Southwater', *Unpublished paper* (1974), pp. 14 -16.
10. An interview with an officer of the West Sussex County Planning Department (4 September 1974, at Chichester) revealed that the

reason given by the DoE Inspector responsible for the appeal decision on the College Wood development, was that airborne pollution of the proposed estate area had been dramatically reduced when the South-water brickworks had changed their energy base from coke to gas fired kilns. At the time of the initial application for permission the County Planning department had been unaware of this change. The planning department accepted this finding but were still opposed to the development of the site (as proposed) because of the congestion of the A.24 and because of inadequate facilities in the village. Nonetheless, the initial decision of the planning authority was over-ruled by the Inspector and development proceeded.

This might suggest inconsiderate planning on behalf of the DoE by the Inspector but an analysis of the decision by the rather surprised County Planning Department revealed that there were political considerations in the appeal decision. The general election of June 1970 brought about a change of government. The newly elected Conservative administration revealed anxiety at the poor rate of new home construction in the country as a whole (as had the preceding Labour government). A desire for immediate improvement resulted in the new masters at the DoE issuing Circular 10/70 to all planning authorities. This circular sought to improve the rate of new home construction by a more liberal interpretation of development controls (later restated in Circular 122/73). The Inspector of the DoE examining the College Wood appeal decided that the very real problems of road congestion and poor village facilities were not sufficient to refuse development permission, when considered in the light of Circular 10/70. There is little doubt that if this circular had not been in force then the Inspector would have upheld the County Planning Department's decision to refuse development permission to

Federated Homes Ltd.

11. For example see:

Nottinghamshire County Council, Derbyshire County Council, Nottingham City County and Derby County Borough Council, *Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire : sub regional study* (1969).

12. J.B. Cullingworth, *op cit.*, (footnote 3), p. 277.

13. Both the Highlands problem and the Highlands and Islands Development Board have been the subject of a large literature. See for example:

D. Turncock, *Patterns of Highland development* (1971).

14. New towns were originally conceived as self-sufficient and largely self-centred communities but this is rarely true with such settlements today. Generally the new town functions as a regional centre and as such will generate employment opportunities for surrounding settlements. The author's experience of North Sussex indicates that this is true with Crawley new town (one of the early post-Second World War new towns). In addition Crawley also functions as an important centre for the shopping and recreational demands of villages several miles away.

15. G. Manners, D. Keeble, B. Rodgers, and K. Warren, *Regional development in Britain*. (1972), pp. 39 - 67.

16. A simple account of the idea of comprehensive development of rural areas is contained in:

D.G. Robinson, Comprehensive development, in J.Ashton and W.H. Long (eds.) *The remoter rural areas of Britain* (1972), pp. 215 - 24.

17. The idea of Rural Development Boards as an exercise in the integrated management of parts of the British countryside stemmed from proposals in the Agricultural Act of 1967. Rural Development Boards were seen essentially in the context of the remoter uplands of Britain. This is reflected in the location of the only Board to be established, the Northern Pennines Board (although there was a proposed board for Mid Wales). Nevertheless the idea of an executive agency co-ordinating many of the conflicting rural land uses, has a wider potential than in such uplands alone. By the nature of its function a RDB is likely to arouse strong local hostilities from some sectors of the population. Ironically such hostility was instrumental in the fall of the Northern Pennines RDB and essentially the cause of the failure to establish a second board, in central Wales (although political factors are also important; see H. Clout, *Rural geography: An introductory survey* (1972), pp. 189 - 95). The present lack of effective co-ordinating measures in the planning of the countryside and its settlements is discussed in Chapter Thirteen. It may be that a re-application of the principles of integrated management may go some way to filling this important gap in the planning system.

18. J.B. Cullingworth, op cit, (footnote 3), p. 43.

19. J.B. Cullingworth, op cit., (footnote 3), p. 133.

20. Planning decisions are occasionally the responsibilities of sub-committees or of the council itself. Both are composed of elected representatives and not professional planners.

21. This is not always the case. Examples of the Secretary of State not following the recommendation of a DoE Inspector, if uncommon, are not rare. For one such case see:
 J.B. Cullingworth, *op cit.*, (footnote 3), p. 303.
22. N. Dennis, *Public participation and planners blight* (1971).
23. HMSO., *The management study on development control* Ministry of Housing and Local Government (1967).
24. J.B. Cullingworth, *op cit.*, (footnote 3), pp. 298 - 99.
25. Complications with part of the plan for Manchester held up its submission until 1961.
26. L. Brett, *Landscape in distress* (1965).
27. See for example:
 E. Doubleday, 'Villages - to plan or not to plan?'
Town and Country Planning 30 (1962), pp. 331 - 35.
28. HMSO., *The future of development plans: A report by the Planning Advisory Group*. Ministry of Housing and Local Government (1965).
29. HMSO., *Development plans: A manual on form and content*. Ministry of Housing and Local Government (1970).
30. Huntingdonshire and Peterborough County Council, *Rural settlement planning policy* (1972).

31. Cheshire County Planning Department, *Policy for rural Cheshire*. (1973).

32. West Sussex County Council has published the following village plans as individual reports:

Billinghurst village plan (1961).

Billinghurst village plan: First review (1970).

Petworth village plan (1971).

Storrington village plan (1953).

Storrington village plan: First review (1966).

Southwater village plan (1969).

Pulborough village plan (1968).

Midhurst village plan (1971).

In addition there are plans for village clusters which are contiguous or nearly contiguous villages, which for the purposes of planning are considered in a joint village plan:

West Chiltington, Nutbourne, and West Chiltington Common:

A village plan (1969).

Steyping, Bramber and Upper Beeding (1962).

Westergate, Eastergate, Yapton and Barnham (1963).

33. There were a few exceptions to this general rule. The many small market towns of England have always been something of a problem category in settlement planning. When such a settlement has more than about ten thousand people it has a clear urban status and in planning terms is generally considered as such. However, many of the smaller market towns have fewer than ten thousand residents and may be classified as either urban or rural. The principal difference

in planning terms is whether or not such settlements are accorded urban status by being classed as urban districts. Small market towns which were not urban districts were classed as villages, and plans prepared for them were similarly considered as village plans (which could only exercise a limited advisory role in development control). Other settlements which were administratively 'urban' may have had similar plans prepared for them but these were classed as 'town plans' and under planning law these were statutory documents with an important role in regulating development.

Consequently one could have two similar settlements with similar plans prepared for them, but in one the plan had a statutory role whilst the other was only used as a guide to the planning authority when considering applications for development.

34. Hampshire is an example of a county in which there is no detailed scheme for village categorisation even though the county follows a policy of selected village development.

35. County council policy on the structure and distribution of schools in rural areas is particularly important, as selected villages are expected to support at least basic primary school facilities.

36. The selection of counties for detailed consideration was determined by a number of requirements:

- (a) The need for a cross-section of counties. In this way it was possible to review both pressure and remote areas and also areas with different degrees of 'rurality'.

(b) The need for a distribution of counties throughout England. This made it possible to review any regional variations in the policies of county authorities.

(c) The need for documentary material to be accessible to the author. Many of the development plans and early planning reports, being unpublished, are difficult to trace (there is no national bibliography of post 1947 development plans and planning reports) and even when located the documents are often not available by the usual channels of inter-library loans. At the time when these various plans were being consulted (early 1975) the author was not aware that the extensive collection of plans housed by the DoE library in Westminster could be examined. Appendix 3 lists the counties actually reviewed.

37. West Sussex County Council was an exception to this general rule. No review of the County Development Plan for this county was ever prepared, although a number of special reports aimed at updating elements of the county planning policy were presented to the planning committee for the county. Uncertainty over regional planning proposals relating to Gatwick Airport and an associated growth zone, delayed the preparation of a formal review until the new development plan system proposed by the 1968 Town and Country Planning Act caused the authority to abandon a review of the county plan.

38. HMSO., *People and Planning: Report of the Committee on Public Participation in Planning* (1969).

39. D. Thorns, *Participation in rural planning*, paper presented to the Seventh Congress of the European Society for Rural Sociology, Munster, August, 1970.

40. Examples of poor public response to participation schemes are common. In the rural context the experience of the West Sussex County Planning Department through an extensive participation scheme associated with the preparation of the village plan for Midhurst, is notable. See:

West Sussex County Council, *Midhurst village plan* (1971).

41. J.B. Cullingworth, *op cit.*, (footnote 3), p. 314.

Table 4.1 : The principal Acts of Parliament relating to planning in England and Wales

Town and Country Planning

Town and Country Planning Acts 1947, 1959, 1962, 1968 and 1971
 Town and Country Planning (Ammendment) Act 1972
 Town Development Act 1952
 Land Compensation Acts 1961 and 1973
 New Towns Acts 1956, 1965 and 1968

Amenity

National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949
 Countryside Act 1968
 Forestry Act 1967
 Trees Act 1970
 Agriculture (Miscellaeneous Provisions) Act 1963
 Metropolitan Commons Act 1866
 Commons Acts 1876 and 1899
 Commons Registrations Act 1965

Employment

Local Employment Acts 1970 and 1972
 Control of Office and Industrial Development Act 1965
 Industrial Development Act 1966

Housing

Housing Acts 1957 and 1959
 Housing Subsidies Act 1967
 Housing Finance Act 1962

Listed Buildings

Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953
 Local Authorities (Historic Buildings) Act 1962
 Civic Amenities Act 1967
 Ancient Monuments Acts 1913 and 1931

Table 4.1 (Continued)Drainage and Water Resources

Rivers (Prevention of Pollution) Acts 1951 to 1961
 Clean Rivers (Estuaries and Tidal Waters) Act 1960
 Rural Water Supplies and Sewerage Acts 1944 to 1961
 Water Resources Acts 1963 and 1968
 Water Acts 1945, 1948 and 1973

Environment

Pipe Lines Act 1962
 Noise Abatement Act 1960
 Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960
 Local Authorities (Land) Act 1963
 Local Government Acts 1966 and 1972
 Road Traffic Acts 1960 and 1962
 Highways Acts 1959 and 1971

NB. Many of these Acts have been partially or extensively repealed in all but a few sections (which remain on the statute books). It is also important to realise that the planning mechanism is also regulated by numerous Circulars and Advice notes from central government departments. A variety of these are dispatched to local planning authorities each year, each relating to a specific topic (for example : guidance notes on the interpretation of development restrictions in Green Belt areas). These are very important, although non statutory, instruments in the planning process.

This list is current to 1974.

Source : J.Ardill, *The new citizens guide to town and country planning.* (1974), pp.140-141.

Table 4.2 The division of planning functions between county and district planning authorities

FUNCTIONS	Local Planning Authorities	
	County	District
Structure Plans	YES	NO
Local Plans	NO ¹	YES
Development Plan Scheme	YES ²	NO
Derelict Land	YES ³	YES ³
National Parks	YES	NO
Countryside Parks	YES ³	YES ³
Conservation Areas	YES ³	YES ³
Building Preservation Notices	YES ³	YES ³
Listed Building Control	NO	YES
Tree Preservation	YES ³	YES ³
Aquisition and disposal of land for development purposes	YES ³	YES ³
Development or re-development	YES ³	YES ³
Development control	YES ⁴	YES ⁴
Advertisement control	NO	YES

Explanatory notes:

1. Generally the preparation of all local plans is the responsibility of district planning authorities. There are, however, a few exceptions to this situation. In National Parks the county authority would be responsible for local plans. In addition the districts should not be seen as having a totally free hand in respect of local plans, since all are subject to the need to conform with the Development Plan Scheme and the County Structure Plan, both of which are prepared by the county planning authority.

Table 4.2 (continued)

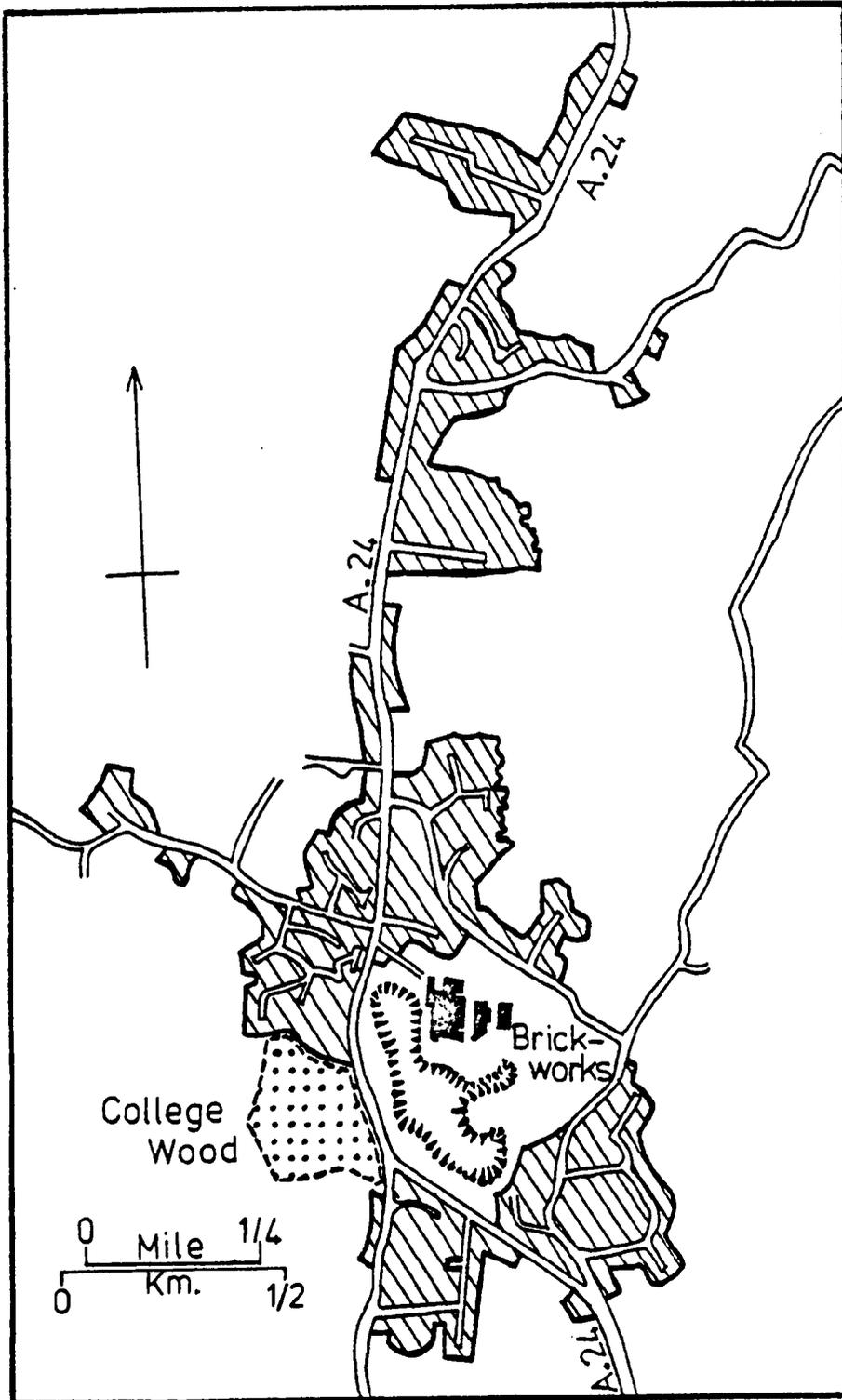
2. In consultation with the district planning authorities.

3. These are concurrent powers exercised by both county and district planning authorities. Half of the fourteen planning functions defined here (and this is by no means an exclusive list) are shared responsibilities. The schedules of the 1971 Town and Country Planning Act do not clearly define the actual responsibilities of the two levels of local government in these shared functions. In the authors experience this may lead to a considerable amount of confusion and often to hostilities between district and county authorities over interference with what each authority may see as its own concern.

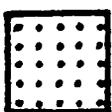
4. Development control is primarily a function of the district authorities. County planning authorities are responsible only when 'county matters' are concerned (as defined under schedule sixteen of the Town and Country Planning Act of 1971) or in the case of National Park areas.

Source : R.M.Blunden and S.Gray, *New districts for old : Volume One : England and Wales.* (1974) p.(iii).

Figure 4.1 : Southwater, Sussex - an example of state influence in village planning



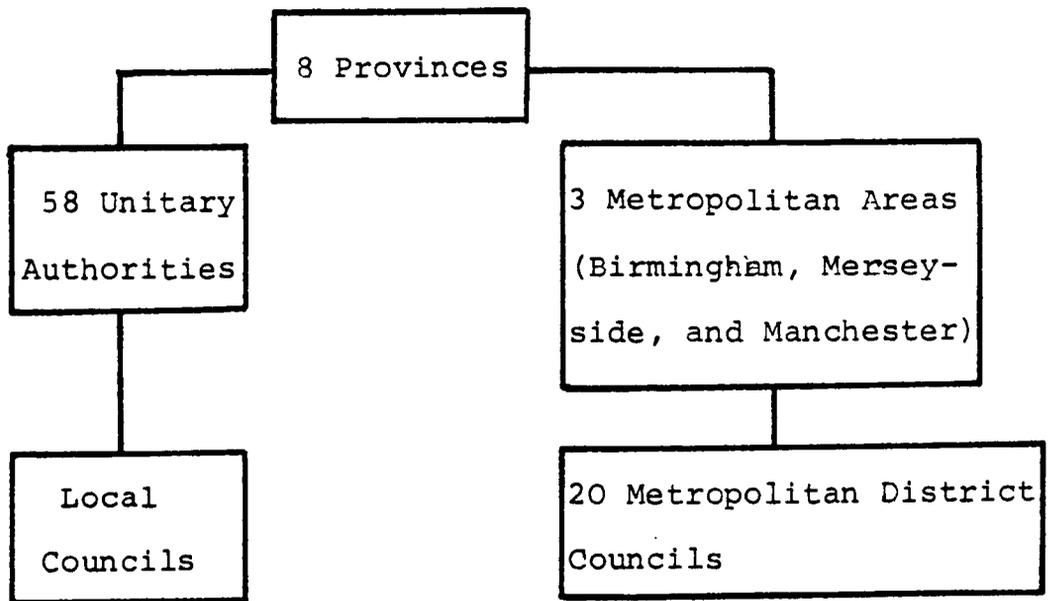
Existing built up area



Proposed area of development

Figure 4.2 Local government in England after the 1974 revision (this excludes the provisions for Greater London)

Proposed local government structure (after the Royal Commission on Local Government for England and Wales , 1969)



Actual structure of local government (implemented 1st April, 1974)

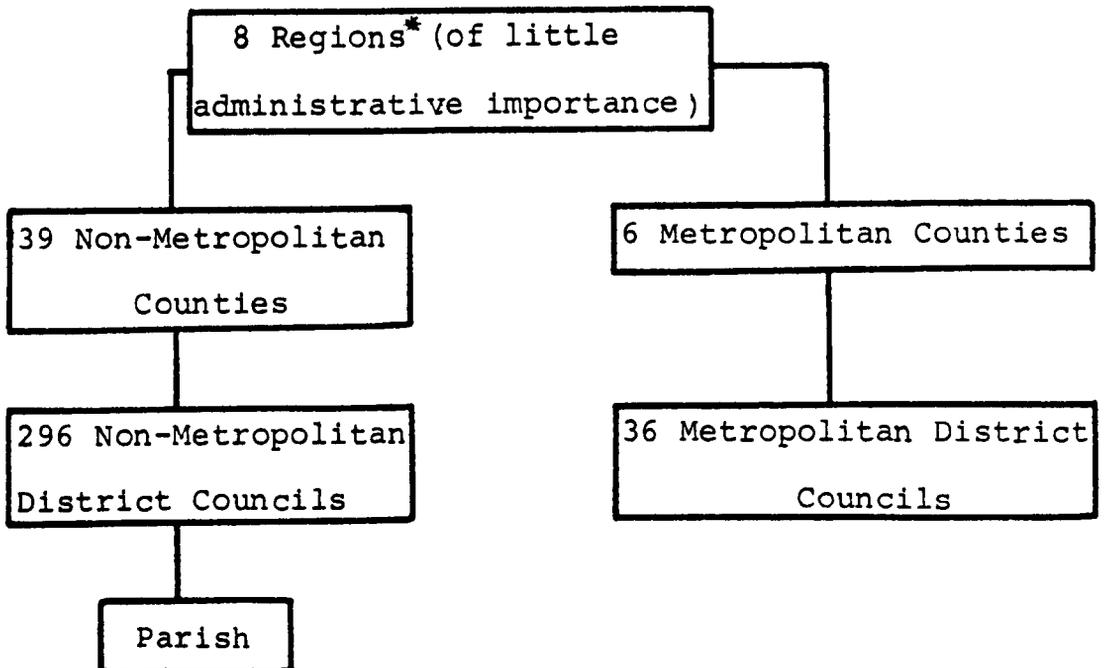
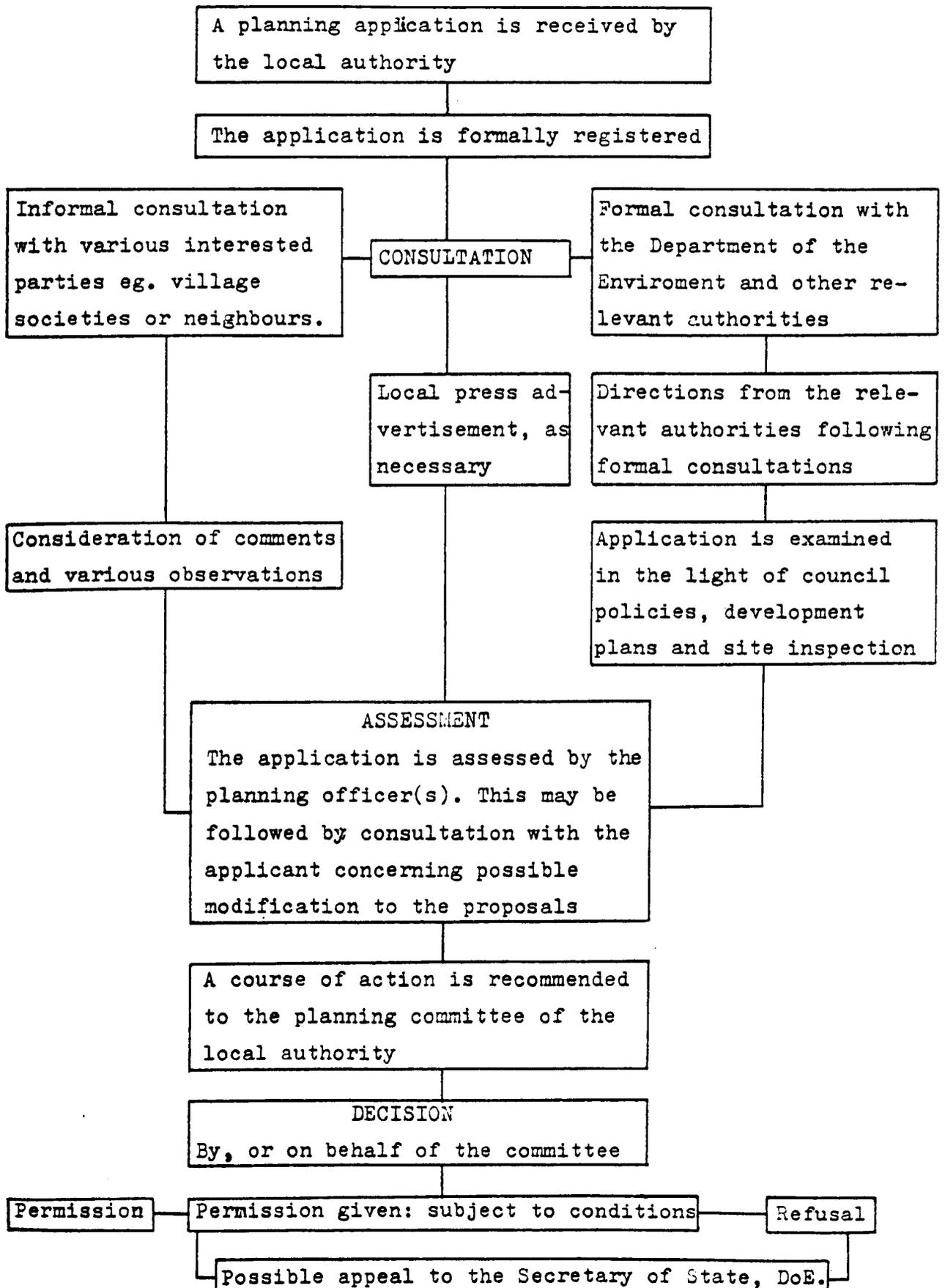


Figure 4.3 : A simplified model of the process of development control



CHAPTER FIVETHE RELATIONSHIP OF CENTRAL PLACE THEORY TO
SELECTED VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT5.1 Introduction

The contribution of central place theory and central village research to the development of ideas of selected village development in England, after Morris, was acknowledged in Chapter Three. This seems to have been particularly important in the 'fifties and 'sixties when central place theory provided a respectable theoretical base for the relatively new ideas of selected village development. This may have acted as an encouragement for many planning authorities to implement selected village policies. It is no coincidence that Green ¹ refers to such policies as 'central place policies'.

Central place theory has a long history of criticism. Over twenty years ago Vining ² criticised the 'fixed K concept' of Christaller on the basis that it produced a stepped size distribution of centres rather than the continuous distribution that is observed in the real world. More recently, however, criticism has been given weight through certain structural and spatial changes in developed economies which have tended to break down traditional central place structures. Principal amongst these changes has been the development of metropolitan regions. Metropolitan or city regions have long been recognised as a fundamental element of the geographic pattern of human settlement in developed economies (see for example Dickinson ³) but it has been only recently that these have been seen to be breaking down traditional central place hierarchies ⁴.

In the context of such criticism it is particularly important that the basis of central place theory and its relationship to rural settlement planning in England, be examined in some detail.

5.2 Central place theory

The two German scholars Walter Christaller and August Lösch developed the theoretical base of central place theory. The germ of their ideas, however, were contained in earlier works, for example by Galpin⁵ and Lalanne⁶. It is usual to consider central place theory as a unified exposition of fundamental principles of locational analysis. Unity, however, is not a feature of the theory. There are basic differences between Christaller's initial thesis⁷ and Lösch's work⁸. Both theorists generally agree on the basic spatial arrangement of functional outlets for optimal distribution of a single commodity to a dispersed population, but differ when seeking to obtain locations for many goods simultaneously. It has been argued that each has separate merits in locational analysis⁹. Lösch's 'theoretical landscapes' are a useful model of spatial patterns of secondary production in developed economies, whilst Christaller's model represents locational aspects of retail and service businesses in the tertiary sector. It is important to recognise the distinction between the two theorists.

Central place studies have developed an extensive literature related to all aspects of the theory. The literature is so extensive that it has justified Berry and Pred's publication of a separate bibliography¹⁰. We are concerned principally with those aspects of the literature concerned with optimal spacing of settlements and

this restricts our analysis to two elements of central place theory:

- (a) Lattices: The theoretical model of a hierarchy of inter-locking 'urban fields' or trade areas, represented by a system of hexagons.
- (b) Locational patterns of functional outlets: The implications of a central place system for the hierarchical distribution of social and economic facilities.

For detailed analysis of these and other aspects of central place theory readers are directed to Berry and Pred's bibliography of central place studies.

Lattices

The lattices of Christaller, Lösch and subsequent theorists represent optimal models of the spatial distribution of a hierarchy of centres of population. The mechanics of these lattices are relatively complex¹¹ and need not concern us here other than to state that the scale and relative efficiency of a given lattice is measured by its 'K' value (efficiency being a measure of the effectiveness of the location of the central places in the lattice in serving subordinate centres).

Figure 5.1 shows a lattice based on Christaller's marketing principle (he also proposed a transport principle and an administrative principle). The number of settlements served by one trade area, i.e. the number of dependent or subordinate centres, is found by:

$$N_c = K^c$$

Where N is the number of dependent centres, K the 'K' value of the lattice and t the tier of the lattice. Hence the number of dependent centres in a given lattice is a function of the tier of that lattice, and the number of dependent centres increases with the tier value. Additionally, in such a classical central place hierarchy:

(a) All places in the same order of the hierarchy are the same size and exercise the same function.

(b) All higher order centres contain all the functions of lower orders.

The Lösschian scheme differs from that of Christaller by adopting the idea of a variable 'K' hierarchy as opposed to the fixed 'K' hierarchy of Christaller's simpler model. Lössch used the same hexagonal unit for his lattices but improved and extended the central place model by superimposing all the various sizes of hexagon on a single point. The lattice created was more complex than Christaller's scheme but it established a model in which all the nets had one centre in common. In addition by rotating these nets Lössch derived a sectoral pattern which represents a strong pattern of variation in the theoretical landscape, a fundamental feature of many locational studies. Figure 5.2 represents a simplified Lösschian landscape with systems of hexagonal nets.

Christaller's form represents the central place concept of hierarchical trade areas more simply than that of Lössch. Consequently Christaller's form may be more successful as a model of fundamental central place concepts. Lattices derived from Lössch's more complex form show that the simple, fairly abstract principles of central

place theory are capable of adaptation to the spatial complexities of the real world.

Locational patterns of functional outlets

From the foregoing discussion we can see that it is a fundamental principle of central place theory that larger centres of population have a wider range of goods, services and functions than smaller centres. Several studies have attempted to trace the exact nature of this size-function relationship. Generally this relationship can be expressed as:

$$N_f \propto P_c + P_a$$

Where N_f is the number of functions, P_c is the population at a given centre and P_a is the population of the lower order centres subordinate to centre c . There are many other correlates of centre size which follow this relationship. In addition, the relationship can be used to define the minimum support population for particular retail service functions. This has recently been used to interpret the structure of rural facilities in parts of Eastern England, in terms of threshold values for the provision of retail/service facilities to rural communities ¹².

Later developments of central place theory

It would be wrong to leave the impression that central place theory began with Christaller and ended with Lössch. Much of the extensive literature written in the field of central place studies subsequent to Lössch, has been motivated by a desire to improve the concept. Generally, developments since August Lössch have tended to

focus on three elements:

(a) Mathematical models of the central place hierarchy and trade areas: Reilly, for example, working on Newtonian principles of classical physics long before Christaller published the first central place literature, developed a series of rules based on the relationship of population to trade area ¹³.

(b) The relationship of central place theory to general systems theory: Berry ¹⁴ attributes the link to Zipf's popularisation of the rank-size rule ¹⁵ that the population of a given urban centre was a function of the size of the largest city of the state (the primate city) and the rank or order of the given centre in relation to the largest centre.

(c) Alternative geometrics: Alternative spatial patterns to those of Christaller and Lössch have been proposed, still following central place principles. One of the most notable of these was the lattice form suggested by Isard ¹⁶. Isard observed that trade areas tended to increase in area with distance from metropolitan centres. Consequently, the trade area of a centre of a given order would be larger if that centre was located in a relatively remote rural area than if it were located on the metropolitan periphery. Isard produced a geometric form, based on a Lösschian landscape, in which he accounted for 'agglomeration disturbances' by increasing the trade area of each order of the hierarchy with increased distance from metropolitan centres.

Change in central place systems

Berry has stated that traditional rural economies are characterised by additions to the number of central places and an associated reduction in trade areas¹⁷. In modern developed economies there seems to be a reversal of these traditional processes brought about by a selective thinning of central places, accompanied by an expansion of trade areas. The causes of this change in modern central place structures are diverse but of particular significance are:

- (a) Changes in transport technology brought about principally by widespread car ownership. By introducing new standards of personal mobility the automobile contributed to new standards of transport and marketing, which made the established spacing of settlement an archaic form (which has already been discussed in the context of rural settlement reorganisation, in Chapter Three). This has led in particular to the eclipse of many lower order centres, in favour of larger centres with their wider range of goods.
- (b) Reductions in the farm population by various processes of agricultural development, which has promoted the decay of many lower order centres.
- (c) Changes of scale in the supply of goods have been the result of a variety of complex market processes. Such changes have led to a rationalisation of functional outlets which has brought about a pattern of location more highly concentrated

than had been the case in traditional central place systems. (This has also been briefly discussed in Chapter Three in the context of the reorganisation and rationalisation of rural services).

A second cause of change in central place systems is the spread of metropolitan regions. In the United States much research has concentrated on the physical spread of cities. In this country such direct influences have been severely restricted by Town and Country Planning legislation after 1947, and particularly Green Belt policies, which has given rural areas a degree of protection from urban sprawl. There are, nonetheless, other causes of the extension of metropolitan regions. The diffusion of metropolitan influences into areas of the countryside far from cities has been very important in over-riding local central places. This is hardly a new process. In rural areas the depopulation of many communities has long been an example of the influence of distant central places on the countryside. More recently these historic patterns have been accelerated into the process that we have termed the spread of metropolitan regions. The instruments of change have been many and are too complex to justify extensive analysis in this discussion¹⁸, but once again changing transport patterns and in particular the extension of car ownership, have been at the forefront of these changes.

The spread of metropolitan or city regions causes many rural central places to drop from one level of the hierarchy to another. Market towns which were once the heart of large rural regions now play a relatively minor role, many of their functions having been usurped by larger centres. Dickinson¹⁹ has examined the central-

isation of market functions in East Anglia in detail. The English countryside contains many examples of such diminished rural centres. The present author, in a separate study ²⁰, has examined one of these at some length and concluded that in this settlement the loss of its formal market function in the mid 'sixties, can be seen as a continuation in the trend leading to a reduction of functional status whose origins are extremely ancient. In many diminished rural centres, however, the origin of their reduced status are much more recent and the scale of these functional changes is such that we may interpret them as manifesting a real structural change in the hierarchy of rural settlement.

There is also a trend towards functional specialisation which is affecting many parts of the countryside within metropolitan regions. This can be seen as a move away from the traditional general character of central place functions towards a pattern of specialised centres in large metropolitan regions linked by the private car. Berry has summarised this process:

"Within the metropolitan regions specialisation replaces the articulation of the central place hierarchy. Some places continue in their central place role, others become resorts or dormitory suburbs. New outlying shopping plazas are constructed, and business ribbons extend along highways. In short the areas brought within expanding metropolitan regions are influenced by new locational forces and forms of inter-dependance, so that classical patterns of central place hierarchies break down and are replaced by business patterns characteristically internal to cities" ²¹.

These processes are probably more advanced in the United States than they are in this country. Nearly thirty years ago Berry was describing a system in the United States which only recently seems to be developing here ²².

Most of the work on changes in the central place system has been within the context of the United States. Nonetheless, the factors causing these changes are also at work in this country, breaking down the traditional representation of central place hierarchies. In the theoretical context it has been suggested that Christaller's simple model is becoming increasingly out-moded²³. Lösch's more complex theoretical landscapes may still be of value within the context of new spatial patterns.

5.3 Central villages in England

Within the United States there has been fairly extensive examination of the central place hierarchy in rural areas and rural trade areas. In this country such research has been more limited. A major contribution, however, has been the work of H.E. Bracey on central villages in England, and it seems appropriate to examine Bracey's work at some length. Bracey has defined a central village as:

"The village with more shops and services than one would expect for its size which is operating services for neighbouring villages and hamlets"²⁴.

Central villages were recognised in this country as early as 1942 by Dickinson²⁵. Research by the Agricultural Economics Research Institute subjectively defined the place of such communities in the hierarchy of rural centres²⁶. Bracey, however, was the first to study the role of central villages in the rural hierarchy in detail. In his first major work, *Social provision in rural Wiltshire*, Bracey found a high positive correlation of social provision to settlement size. For commercial and professional facilities a correlation of

0.70 was found and for the number of social organisations and assembly places within respective communities, 0.67. This was empirical evidence supporting the central place rule that the number of retail/service establishments at a given centre is a function of population size. Bracey's work on social provision led him further so that from the results of his Wiltshire study a sixfold grading of settlements was postulated. This simple hierarchy was based on the ranking of an index of social provision that had been calculated for each settlement. There were a number of limitations of using simple ranked scores as parameters of the tiers of the hierarchy (Bracey acknowledged these ²⁷), but these do not seem to have been of major significance. Each settlement having been graded the following population threshold were discovered:

- Grade I The regional centre, e.g. Bristol.
- Grade II Major county towns, e.g. Salisbury, (13,000 to 70,00 population).
- Grade III Smaller county towns, e.g. Devizes, (2,500 to 13,000 population).
- Grade IV Small Towns, (15,000 to 4,000 population).
- Grade V Large villages, (400 to 4,000 population),
- Grade VI Other centres, (Less than 1,500 population).

The descriptive terms for the grades are my own but the population threshold are those of Bracey's empirical findings (see Table 5.1).

Bracey's hierarchy shows a remarkable degree of overlap of threshold values. The study attributed these to disturbances caused by the geographical position of settlements, historical tradition and local initiative through entrepreneurial factors.

Subsequent work by Bracey focussed on the role of central villages which correspond to grades IV and V in the Wiltshire hierarchy. Following earlier work on the trade areas of towns as rural service centres in Somerset²⁸, Bracey suggested a simple quantitative division of central villages into three tiers²⁹:

Grade 1 20 and more shops.

Grade 2 10 to 19 shops.

Grade 3 5 to 9 shops.

Centres with less than five shops did not exercise central village functions. Once again, although the general grading was related to population size in the respective centres, there were considerable distortions from the simple rank-size relationship that would be expected in a central place model.

Bracey attributed the importance of central villages in the pattern of rural servicing, to:

- (a) Entrepreneurial initiative.
- (b) Spatial position.
- (c) Increased rural trade.
- (d) Convenience.

Later work by Bracey in association with Brush indicated that the spacing of rural service centres in South Western Wisconsin and in Southern England was very similar³⁰.

Over twenty years have passed since Bracey's work on the rural hierarchy in England but his basic principles seem to remain intact. In the two present case studies, one of the rural area lying adjacent to a large metropolitan centre, the other a more remote rural area, we provide the basis for a simple reappraisal of Bracey's findings. The study areas are described in Chapter Six, whilst the detailed analysis of social provision in these two areas is restricted to Chapter Eleven, but we can examine the broad geographical pattern here.

An analysis of the case study of South Nottinghamshire indicates that the rank-size rule is generally followed. The same is true for North Norfolk. This is shown in Figures 5.3 and 5.4. However, the relationship of functional status, as measured by number of retail outlets, and population size, is far from perfect. This is illustrated in Figures 5.5 and 5.6. Whilst this relationship does not conform to a perfect central place association in the study areas, as we might have expected, it is interesting to note that Bracey recognised a similar phenomenon in his Wiltshire study. Bracey acknowledged the importance of 'urban extension' and 'industrial' villages in disturbing the rank-size relationship. In South Nottinghamshire such communities still exert a similar role. Cotgrave (5,083 population) is a large community recently expanded under the auspices of the establishment of a National Coal Board mine. As such Cotgrave is an 'industrial village'. Cotgrave has only fourteen shops (Plate 5.1) compared to an average of over twice this number in the five other large (non-industrial) villages of South Nottinghamshire: Bingham (38), East Leake (27), Keyworth (19), Radcliffe on Trent (34) and Ruddington (29). It is difficult to identify

urban extension villages since most of the South Nottinghamshire villages lie within the metropolitan region of Greater Nottingham. Nonetheless, the village of Tollerton provides an example of disturbance of the rank-size rule due to being located very close to an urban area. Tollerton is a good example of what Bracey termed "urban extension villages". The bulk of development in the village (population 1,682) is focussed on a large, suburban estate located adjacent to the A.606, and the built up fringe of Greater Nottingham is less than a mile from the outskirts of the Tollerton estate. There are three shops in the village. Again this is fewer than other similarly sized settlements in South Nottinghamshire: Cropwell Bishop (6), Gotham (12) and Sutton Bonnington (7).

The factors of geographical position, local initiative and historical tradition seem to account for other minor disturbances of the rank-size rule in both South Nottinghamshire and North Norfolk. One disturbance factor which Bracey did not stress within the rural context was tourism. but this is of some importance in North Norfolk. Wells (population 2,345) has sixty-one shops, far more than one would normally expect from a settlement of this size. This situation is a direct product of the status of this settlement as a locally important coastal resort.

There do seem to be some significant changes in Bracey's grading of settlement. Changes in the population threshold of all tiers of the rural hierarchy are to be expected. In South Nottinghamshire there are six settlements corresponding to the fourth tier (IV) of Bracey's sixfold grading of rural service centres. All of these, however, have populations in excess of the 4,000 maximum that

Bracey suggested for this tier. This is largely a product of the growth of these settlements which have considerably expanded their population in the last twenty years, but have not followed this with an associated development of their functional role. The causes of this process will be reviewed later in this Chapter. In the remoter rural area, North Norfolk, different socio-economic fortunes have caused many settlements to decline in population. Generally the larger settlements have maintained their size (and some have more recently increased their population) creating a situation in which the threshold suggested by Bracey over twenty years ago, are still applicable.

The threefold grading of central villages in Somerset has severe limitations when applied to social provision in the central villages of North Norfolk and South Nottinghamshire. In Bracey's work, the distribution of retail facilities amongst central villages followed the fundamental central place principle that the number of centres of a given order was inversely proportional to the tier of the order, i.e. the higher the order, the fewer the representative centres. Table 5.2 shows that Bracey's results for Somerset follow this principle, but the situation in both of the case studies is rather more complicated. In South Nottinghamshire and North Norfolk there are about as many grade one central villages (twenty shops and over) as there are grade two and three put together. It was at first suspected that this apparent reversal of Bracey's hierarchical ordering might be the result of the considerable difference in size between Bracey's survey area (the whole county of Somerset) and these two contemporary studies. In an attempt to test this possibility Clout's ³¹ analysis of retail distribution in the whole of North

Norfolk (as opposed to the more limited area of the case study) was graded according to Bracey's parameters. The results were consistent: eight centres had twenty or more shops (grade one), seven had from ten to nineteen shops (grade two) and six centres from five to nine shops (grade three). Unfortunately, it is not feasible to test the grading of these two survey areas for the period of Bracey's study³², so it is possible that the difference between Somerset and these two studies may be due to a general lack of compatibility rather than to temporal change. Nonetheless, the experience of this author in other rural areas suggests that the pattern of grading in South Nottinghamshire and North Norfolk is commonly repeated elsewhere. In the following section it is suggested that this is due to the implementation of selected village development policies in rural areas.

5.4 Selected villages as central places

We have already noted that Green has referred to policies of selected village development as 'central place policies'. This suggests that local planning authorities follow schemes of selected village development in an attempt to create a settlement pattern more closely related to a classical central place model. In other parts of Europe such a goal has been sought, with varying degrees of success, usually in those areas of newly reclaimed farmland which are to be colonised³³. In this country the possibilities for establishing such an ordered hierarchy have been extremely limited, and it is doubtful that any planning authority has sought to do more than re-inforce the present framework (settlement re-organisation excepted) which, as Bracey has shown, reflects many central place relationships.

The motives for establishing selected villages have not been associated with a doctrinal implementation of contemporary principles of locational analysis. Nonetheless, it is clear from written policies that those villages selected for major growth are intended also to function as central places for the provision of shopping and service facilities for the neighbouring smaller villages. Many selected villages are also destined to act as centres for employment and recreation, within the confines of a more specialised urban hierarchy. In Chapter Three the basic problems of rural settlement were introduced, and it was seen that selected village development was a simple and convenient locational policy for using development control as a tool geared towards the solution of these problems. Some local authorities may have implemented selected village development through a genuine desire to act on salient rural problems. Many other authorities followed a scheme of selected village development through the financial advantages discussed in Chapter Three. Finally, we cannot ignore that to some local authorities faced with pressure for improved rural facilities, it was also politically expedient to implement such planning policies. Consequently, if contemporary schemes of rural settlement policy have re-inforced a geographical hierarchy of central villages, it has not been through a deliberate implementation of central place ideas but because such a hierarchy was considered to be socially desirable, financially advantageous, or politically expedient. A Norfolk County Council policy document has summarised this motivation as:

"To meet these problems it was considered that there is a need to reinforce the structure of rural areas by stimulating and concentrating industrial and residential growth in certain locations, with a basic need for increased employment in the areas beyond the reach of the major towns, to offset the decline in agricultural and other employment and to provide a wider range of opportunities than at present".³⁴

The degree to which selected villages function as central places is dependent on a number of factors. We have already acknowledged that the factors of geographical location, local initiative and historical tradition, as mentioned by Bracey, are still important in determining the number of facilities in a given centre, and therefore the role of that centre as a central place. Three elements, however, seem to be of particular importance:

(a) Spatial position in respect of major urban centres: This is a particularly important element of the more general locational factor. If a selected village is located relatively close to a large town it is unlikely to function as an important rural service centre. This is a simple reflection of elementary rules of competition (although as Chapter Eleven indicates, there may be situations in which selected villages partially overcome this urban influence). This influence of urban centres can produce quite remarkable differences between the standard of facilities in comparably sized centres in remoter rural areas and pressure areas. The villages of South Nottinghamshire and North Norfolk reflect this distinction in terms of retail facilities. There are six centres in South Nottinghamshire with over five thousand population and each has between fourteen and thirty-eight shops (mean of 27 shops).

In the smaller case study area in North Norfolk there is only one comparably sized centre, Fakenham (population 4,467), and this has seventy-seven shops. An important factor in this distinction is that Fakenham is twenty-one miles from the nearest major town (King's Lynn), whilst none of the six South Nottinghamshire centres is more than eleven miles from the nearest large town and most are considerably closer.

(b) The provision of facilities: Because of the factors we have mentioned before, there are considerable differences in the level of facilities in selected villages. The actual distinctions are discussed more fully in the analysis of social provision in South Nottinghamshire and North Norfolk in Chapter Eleven. We need only note here that the differences of provision brought about by the operation of market and geographical factors are reinforced by the pattern of investment by local authorities. Selected villages are provided with certain basic facilities by local government. Mains sewerage facilities and a primary school are virtually universal, and facilities such as public libraries and health centres are commonly provided. Other 'essential' services such as secondary schools, sports and youth centres are very selectively located, contributing to the general difference in the facilities of selected villages and strongly influencing their capacity to act as service centres to neighbouring communities.

(c) Accessibility: This single element can considerably influence the ability of a centre to act as a rural service centre. Many rural households are still dependent on public transport for daytime movement. These are the households where

the 'breadwinner' takes the family car to work each day leaving the housewife as 'daily immobile'. This phenomenon is discussed in Chapter Ten. Consequently, if a selected village is served by adequate public transport facilities from neighbouring communities, then its capacity to act as a central place will not be impaired by the daily immobility of many housewives.

Christaller implied that in a classical central place system, all centres at the same tier of a hierarchy would be of the same size and exercise the same function. We have already shown that there can be considerable differences between the functional roles of selected villages. In addition, the size of such centres varies quite considerably. Bracey's Wiltshire study indicated that the population size of settlements at a given level of the rural hierarchy was better represented by a population range bounded by maximum and minimum thresholds, than by a single 'ideal' size. Bracey's observation is even more applicable now. Most "natural" central villages have been selected by the respective planning authorities for development. However, there has not been a uniform degree of expansion amongst such settlements. Some selected villages in the pressure areas have expanded rapidly, particularly in the late 'sixties and early 'seventies, whilst others in such areas and most selected centres in the remoter areas have generally developed rather more slowly. The actual size distinctions are reflected in the analysis of the case study areas in Chapter Eight.

The situation is reflected in the confusion that now exists as to the ideal size of a selected village that is to function as a rural service centre. Lloyd has suggested 15,000 to 25,000 population³⁵.

An optimum size of 8,000 population has been suggested elsewhere ³⁶, whilst Green has stated that the minimum population needed to support a full range of local rural facilities is 5,000 ³⁷.

The geographical pattern of selected villages differs from classical principles of central place theory in one other significant respect: the order-centre number rule. This was briefly investigated in the preceding section, in which it was discovered that the application of Bracey's threefold grading of central villages to the North Norfolk and South Nottinghamshire case studies produced a hierarchy in which there were more centres of a higher order than in the two lower orders. This is a basic contradiction of central place theory. Furthermore, as Bracey's grading of Somerset villages in the early 'fifties conformed to central place principles it is possible that this contemporary contradiction has been a development of the past twenty years. Observations from the case studies and from more general experience in counties elsewhere in England indicate that the adoption of selected village development policies has, at least in part, brought about this apparent change.

Settlements chosen as selected villages are generally established central villages. Furthermore, such centres usually correspond to the highest order of Bracey's grading (twenty shops or more). In pressure areas the demand for more development capacity in rural areas often exhausts the 'supply' of highest order central villages, and it is common to find smaller central villages (grade two or three) included in the 'selected village' category of planning policies. Subsequently, the concentration of development, and of private and public investment in such centres often expands the number

of facilities at such centres so that they may become grade one central villages. East Leake in South Nottinghamshire is a good example of this process. In 1951 the population of the village was 2,117 and the village had twelve shops and a few basic services. The village was subsequently defined as a selected centre and by 1971 had doubled its size (4,720). In 1974 the village had expanded its facilities to include a further fifteen shops, a purpose built health centre and public library (Plate 5.2) and a new community centre. Consequently, in 1951 the village was classed as a grade two central village, by 1974 it was grade one, a product of its planning status.

Consequently, in the pressure areas there has been a general expansion of central village facilities causing some grade two and three central villages to be reclassified as grade one. However, the central village hierarchy has functioned as a closed system under the influence of planning controls. Frequently, the population of central villages have been expanded to the size of small or medium sized market towns but few have seen an associated expansion of facilities to a comparable standard. As such they still function as central villages and not as market towns. On the other hand, few smaller or medium sized villages have established themselves as grade three central villages by expanding their facilities. This may be partly a reflection of wider scale change in retail distribution which has increasingly focussed shops and services on central villages, but it is largely a product of restrictive development policies generally applied to smaller villages. Consequently, few settlements have moved up to the central village status and few have been able to move upwards out of the group. Given such a static



Plate 5.2 East Leake in South Nottinghamshire

The library and health centre shown in this photograph, were two of the public services provided during the rapid expansion of the village in the mid and late 'sixties, and early 'seventies. As a doctors surgery and a lending library existed in the village before the construction on these new units, their provision is better seen as an extension of existing services rather than the provision of new facilities.

situation it is inevitable that internal upwards migration of villages from grade two or three to grade one of central village status, causes a drain on the lower tiers and an imbalance (according to classical central place ideas) of the tiers, weighted towards the top.

Selected villages may function as central places (and this is examined in more detail in Chapter Eleven), but it is clear from the foregoing discussion that the modern, planned hierarchy of rural settlement deviates from many of the fundamental principles of central place theory.

5.5 Planning categories as a modern settlement hierarchy

Much of the previous discussion has concentrated on the apparent inadequacy of central place concepts to accurately describe the spatial structure of modern rural settlement in this country. In this context it would seem appropriate here to consider bases for an alternative model of the rural settlement hierarchy.

Categories of settlement as defined in planning reports, represent a framework for instituting schemes of selected village development. As the fuller discussion in Chapter Seven indicates, categories of settlement can be seen as a hierarchy of village groups, based on a judgement of the capacity of settlements to absorb development and on their suitability for capital investment. Given the considerable effects that Town and Country Planning legislation has on individual settlements, it might seem that such a hierarchy would constitute more of a superior tool for geographical analysis than a central place hierarchy.

This planning hierarchy has only the broadest of similarities to the functional hierarchy of a central place system. The smallest settlements with minimal facilities tend to be at the bottom of the hierarchy, whilst the larger centres with a fuller range of facilities tend to be at the top. Outside this the relationship between the two schemes is rather tenuous.

In practice, the use of a system of planning categories as a settlement hierarchy provides a number of difficulties. Assuming that the requirements of a hierarchy in this context are to provide a system of ranked groups of settlement, the constituent centres of each group sharing common functional or physical similarities, then the following problems arise:

(a) Local factors affecting the designation of individual settlements: Generally the designation of settlements is strongly influenced by the facilities of individual villages. Small villages with very few, if any, shops or services and, frequently, no mains drainage, are not considered to be suitable for expansion without considerable capital investment. As such they are designated as for limited development only. medium-sized communities with a few shops, a village primary school and mains drainage are categorised for moderate development. Generally it is the largest rural centres with a full range of facilities that are placed in the major expansion or 'growth community' category. However, this broad basis for designation is affected by numerous local factors. Proximity to urban areas or other rural communities, or to valuable agricultural land will limit the development capacity of a

settlement. Location within areas of tight development control, such as green belts or national parks, will have a similar effect. Additionally the physical structure of a given settlement may make it unsuitable for further development. Any one of these and many other factors (which are examined at length in Chapter Seven) may displace a settlement from others of a similar size and function and place it in a lower tier of settlements with which the given settlement shares few, if any, similarities.

(b) Influence of conservation gradings: Many planning authorities designate a special category for villages of particular amenity value. Proposed development in such communities is subject to the strictest development controls. These villages are therefore at the bottom of the planning hierarchy. However, some authorities do not create this category therefore contributing to a lack of comparability between the hierarchies of different local authorities.

(c) Differences in definition of categories: Each planning authority creates its own categories. Consequently there are differences of definition and terminology that would make comparison of respective hierarchies very difficult, if not impossible.

(d) Individual development patterns in villages: A variety of local factors such as position, land ownership, different development capacities, community status, and development initiative, combine to produce individual patterns of

development in villages. Consequently, the development of villages in the same planning category can be very different. This severely limits the homogeneity of the tiers of the planning hierarchy.

(e) Influence of entrepreneurial initiative and historical development: Again, this is a factor disturbing the homogeneity of categories. Small villages may be selected for moderate expansion simply through the existence of spare capacity in the village school, and in the sewerage treatment plant, or through local employment opportunities. Other factors brought about by entrepreneurial initiative or related to the provision of facilities by Victorian or later benefactors, may similarly influence the categorisation of a given settlement.

Planning categories are simple, convenient groupings of villages to which similar development policies are applied. Categories were not created as a theoretical hierarchy, and it is clear that the lack of homogeneity in categories and problems of comparison, do not allow these groups to be used as the tiers of a hierarchical model describing modern rural settlement patterns in this country.

5.6 Functional interdependence

The traditional view of the English village is of a distinct community relying on market towns and regional centres for those goods which its own fairly limited facilities cannot provide. This opinion seems to stereotype the attitude of most policy makers in respect of village planning. Recent research has suggested the

existence of extended rural communities consisting of several neighbouring villages which share many recreational facilities and organisations, some shops and services and, increasingly, employment. The social and economic interaction of the separate villages of such extended communities has been termed 'functional interdependence'. Within the context of an assessment of central place theory this research is important since it describes a system of social and economic provision which is lateral, in contrast to the traditional hierarchical servicing of rural settlements in the central place model.

Martin's study in Devon³⁸ was amongst the first to recognise the existence of an extended community. MacGregor has subsequently expanded on this idea and examined some of the processes involved particularly in respect of recreation patterns in Somerset villages³⁹. More recently Weekly⁴⁰ has examined the degree of functional interdependence in a small study area of Northamptonshire.

It is important to realise there have always been elements of lateral servicing in rural areas. Kinship links and transport limitations promoted these, so that one village might often use tradesmen and other services of a neighbouring village of the same size. Nonetheless, lateral servicing was not the dominant element of the historical pattern of social and economic provision. This was generally hierarchical in nature, following simple central place principles. The recent discussions of the 'discoveries' of rural systems that are functionally interdependent, have suggested that lateral servicing is now of increased importance in the countryside. From this we can recognise parallels with the dispersed city hypothesis⁴¹.

McLoughlin has recently proposed that rural settlement planning policy should recognise the significance of lateral servicing⁴². It is true that planners have been reluctant to modify their characteristically hierarchical models of rural systems. This may have been caused by the central place 'doctrines' integral to much of the geographical training of many professional planning officers, or alternatively to ignorance of the importance of lateral servicing, for the recognition of this phenomenon has only fairly recently been popularised. McLoughlin's enthusiasm for the idea of the extended community and his concern for the genuine deficiencies of contemporary policies, encourages him to suggest that the extended community, a group of functionally interdependent villages, should be adopted as the new basis for settlement policy, replacing selected villages. There are precedents for this approach. Morris's innovative proposals for educational provision in rural Cambridgeshire (see Chapter Three) were based on his concept of a 'regional community' of villages. In addition, in the late 'sixties a planning document published by Bedfordshire County Council⁴³ suggested the idea of village 'clusters' (groups of villages with similar characteristics and problems which were geographically related) which were to be treated as composite planning units. McLoughlin, however, seems to have been carried away with his enthusiasm. He does acknowledge the obvious problems of recognising spatially distinct regional communities. However, he does not examine in depth his assumption that since a system of functional interdependence (based on lateral servicing) is important in many rural areas, then planning policies which are largely based on a hierarchical model should be dispensed with. McLaughlin assumes that hierarchical and lateral models are functionally incompatible.

In practice this need not be the case, as the historical precedents indicate.

The detailed results of research into the pattern of consumer behaviour in the two case study areas of South Nottinghamshire and North Norfolk are presented in Chapter Eleven, but it would be valuable to introduce some of the conclusions of that work here. The pattern of consumer behaviour of the rural residents in the two areas was largely related to the urban centres, and to a more limited extent, the selected villages. Low order shopping goods were frequently supplied by the home community but the shops of neighbouring villages were important in at least one of the study villages. Generally, neighbouring villages were only of importance in shopping patterns when individual shopkeepers from small villages operated a mobile service. The pattern of use of services was very similar to that for consumer behaviour. Employment was not as dependent on urban centres as might be expected and neighbouring villages often provided a significant proportion of a given villages employment.

It is probably in the area of recreation that neighbouring villages, and lateral servicing are most important. Even the large, selected villages with a range of recreational facilities, tended to use the facilities of neighbouring villages. If there is any validity in the idea of the extended community then it is to be found within the area of recreation. These results do show that hierarchical servicing (the use of selected villages and successively larger urban centres) and lateral servicing, can exist within the same system of social provision.

In this practical perspective it is suggested that the newly recognised processes of lateral servicing do not refute the hierarchical hypothesis of central place theory, but merely modify it by noting the importances to a greater or lesser degree, of functional interdependence amongst neighbouring villages as well as acknowledging their service dependence on neighbouring urban centres. In this context, McLoughlin's call for a new approach to the planning of rural settlement seems unfounded. Nonetheless, the present author shares McLoughlin's concern over the lack of recognition of lateral processes in contemporary planning policies. Ironically, Morris's concept of the 'regional community' on which contemporary selected village development policies are based, provides an ideal unit for the incorporation of elements of lateral servicing. It is most important that planners should recognise the functional significance of lateral servicing patterns, even if these do not dominate the pattern of consumer behaviour in villages.

5.7 Summary

Central place theory is a complex body of geographical and related theory established on the theoretical bases of the German scholars Christaller and Lösch. Broadly, the theory develops, conceptually and mathematically, a hierarchical principle of the spatial ordering of centres of settlement and their respective trade areas. The pattern of rural servicing in England is generally interpreted through central place principles. Work in the early 'fifties by Bracey has shown that whilst there are deviations from the fundamental central place principles, the spacing and ordering of rural centres in England

can be seen as a central place system.

More recent research in the United States has indicated that rise in the car ownership rate, changes in the pattern of retail distribution, relative increases in household income and other factors, are tending to break down traditional central place systems. The metropolitan region and the 'dispersed city' hypothesis are increasingly important geographic principles. These factors have also been important in this country.

The planning of English rural settlement through policies of selected village development represents a hierarchical system based on selected villages operating as rural centres. Factors which have been contributing to the apparent breakdown of central place concepts have instituted important changes to this system. The ability of selected villages to function as central places is dependent on a variety of local factors and not just on the size of the centre and its functional development (as central place theory suggest). In addition, the disturbances to central place interpretation mentioned by Bracey have been extended. Finally, a pure hierarchical model of rural servicing has been modified by the recognition of patterns of lateral servicing. The central place interpretation remains an adequate model but changes over the last twenty years in rural areas have compromised the status of the model to act at anything other than a fairly abstract level.

FOOTNOTES

1. R.J. Green, *Country planning* (1971), p. 24.
2. R. Vining, 'A description of certain spatial aspects of an economic system'. *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 3 (1955), pp. 147 - 95.
3. R.E. Dickinson, *City region and regionalism* (1947).
4. B.J.L. Berry, *Geography of market centres and retail distribution* (1967), pp. 106 - 24.
5. C.J. Galpin, *The social anatomy of an agricultural community* (1915).
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Table 5.1 Hierarchy of rural centres relating to rural Wiltshire

GRADE	STRUCTURE	RANGE
I	<u>Regional centre</u> : Bristol	N/A
II	<u>3 Centres</u> : Swindon, Salisbury, Trowbridge	68,390 to 13,850
III	<u>10 centres</u> : Devizes, Warminster, Bradford, Westbury, Melksham, Marlborough, Calne, Malmesbury, Witton, Chippenham	12,800 to 2,537
IV	<u>10 Centres</u> :	4,365 to 1,399
V	<u>26 centres</u> :	3,846 to 409
VI	<u>36 centres</u> :	1,484 to 180

Source : H.E.Bracey, *Social provision in rural Wiltshire*. (1952)

Table 5.2 A comparison of the hierarchy of central villages in Somerset with that in the case study areas of South Nottinghamshire and North Norfolk¹

GRADE ²	No. of shops	No. of villages (within the grades)		
		SOMERSET	SOUTH NOTTINGHAMSHIRE	NORTH NORFOLK
1	Over 20	21	5	2
2	10-19	28	2	1
3	5-9	34	3	2

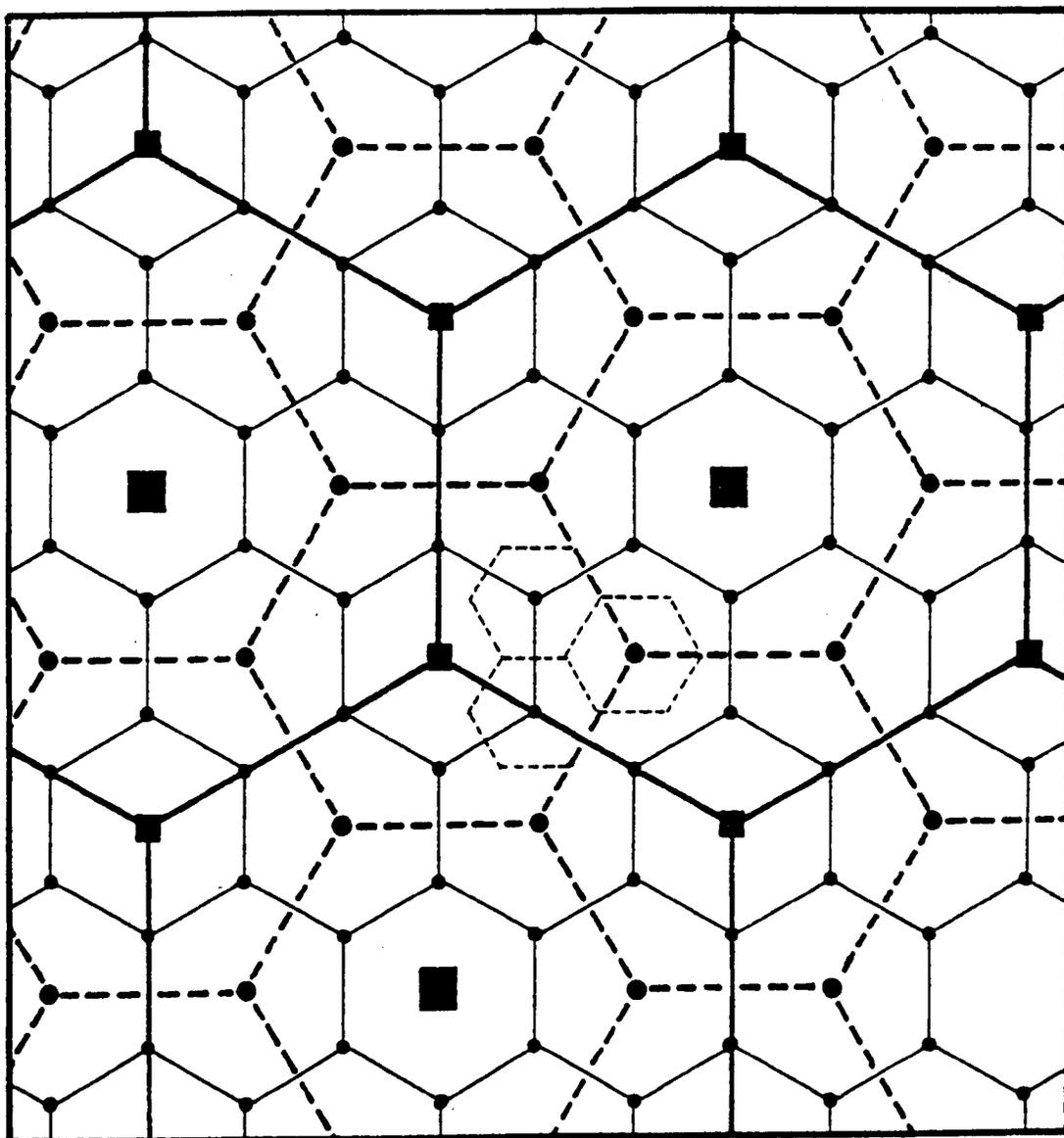
1. The case study areas are defined in Chapter Six
2. The grades are those defined in Bracey's three-fold classification of central villages in Somerset. Settlements with fewer than five shops were not classified as central villages.

Sources : (a) Somerset : H.E.Bracey, *English central villages: Identification, distribution and function*. IGU Symposium in Urban Geography. Lund Studies 24 (1960), pp.182-184.

(b) South Nottinghamshire : Fieldwork 'winter' 1973/4.

(c) North Norfolk : Fieldwork 'summer' 1975.

Figure 5.1 A central place lattice according to Christaller



Centres (in descending order)

1st order



2nd order



3rd order



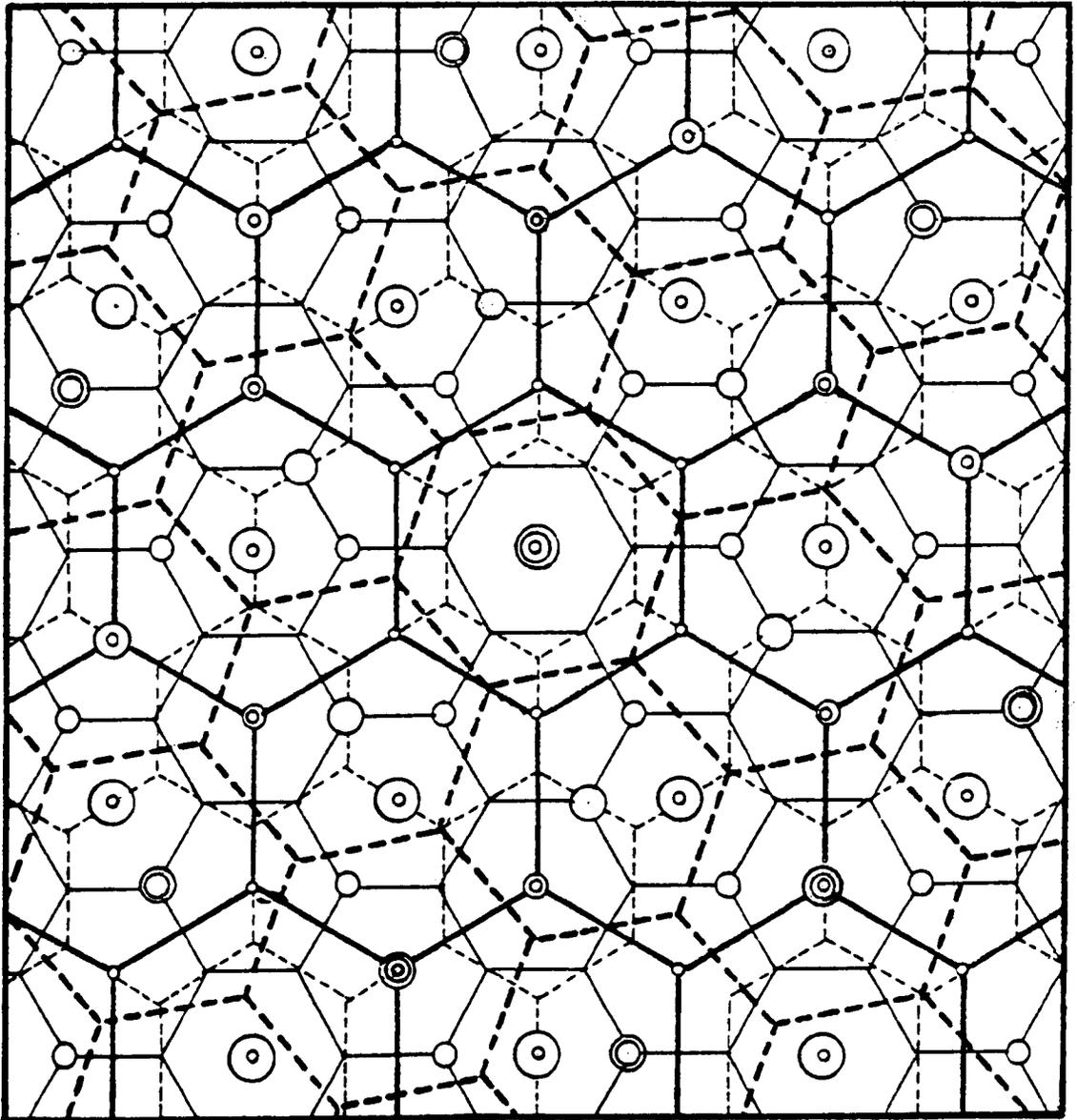
4th order



Associated trade area boundaries



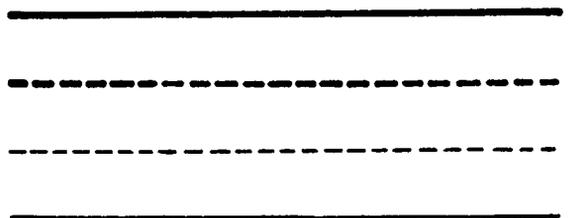
Figure 5.2 A simplified lattice according to Losch's marketing principle



Type of Service

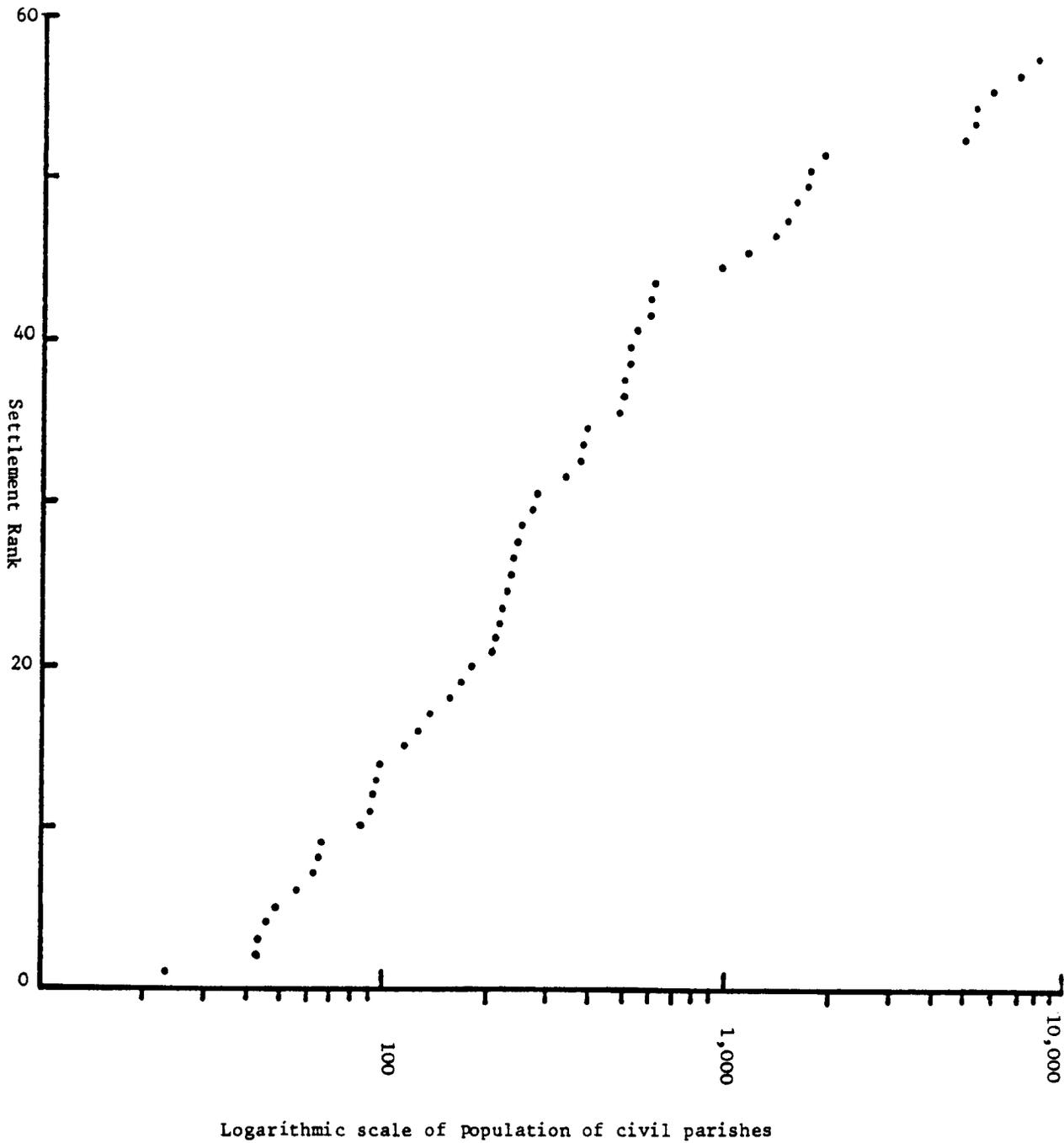


Associated zone of influence



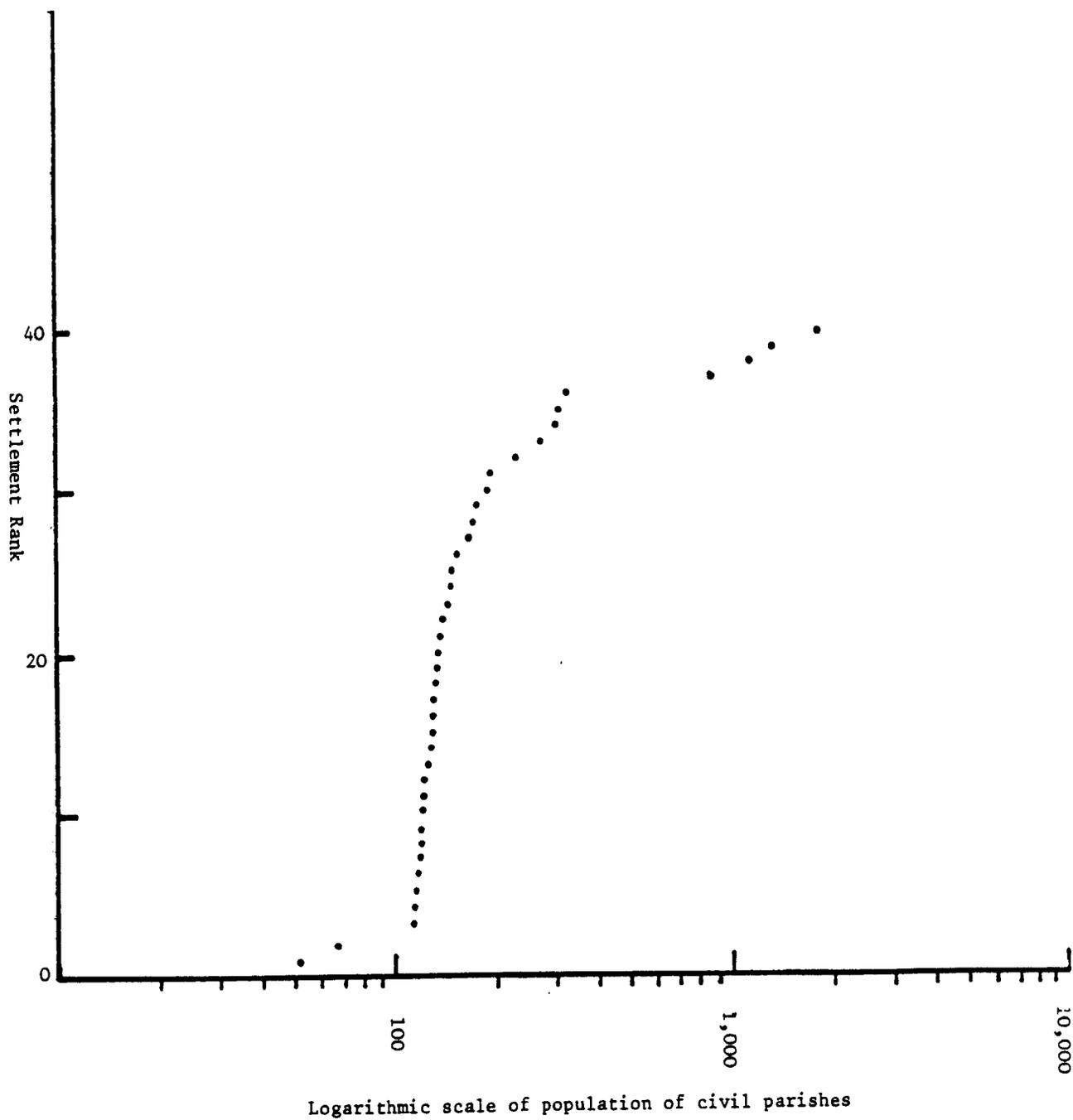
Source: J.R.Blunsden, *Spatial aspects of society* (1971), p.101.

Figure 5.3 The rank-size relationship for civil parishes in the South Nottinghamshire case study area, 1971



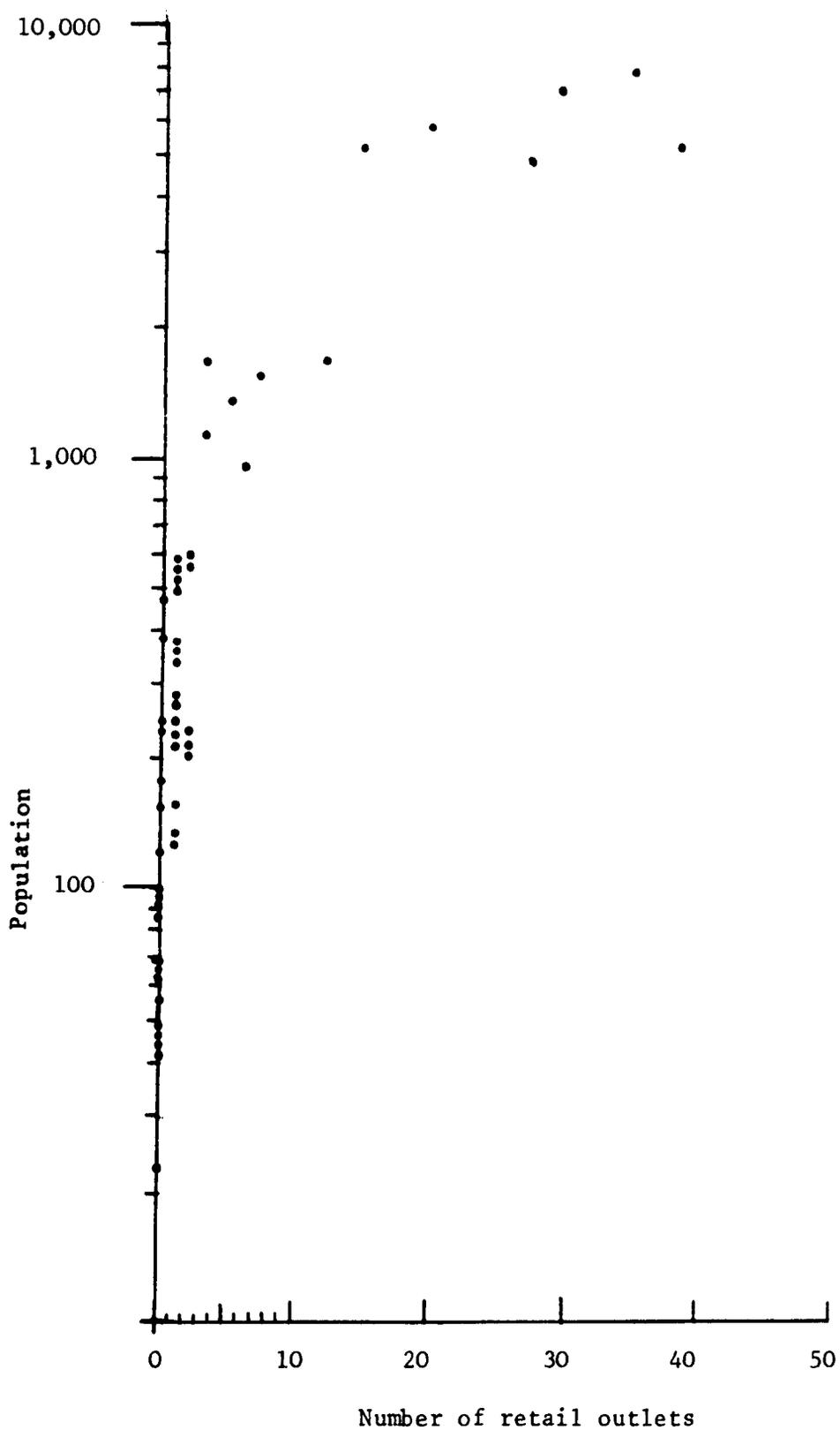
Source: Census, 1971

Figure 5.4 The rank-size relationship for civil parishes in the North Norfolk case study area, 1971



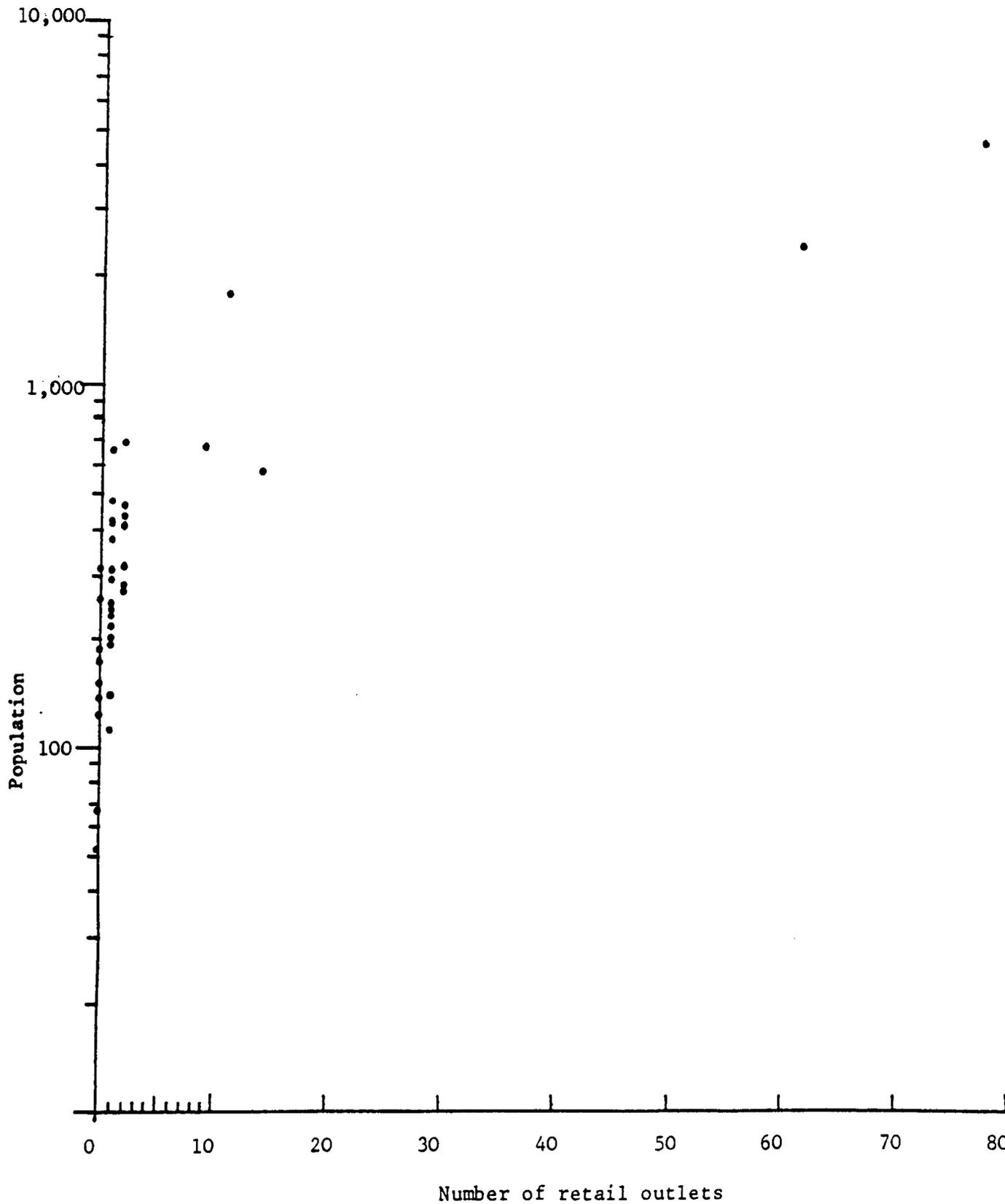
Source: Census, 1971

Figure 5.5 The relationship between functional status (as measured by number of retail outlets) and population size of civil parishes in South Nottinghamshire



Source : Fieldwork (1973/4) and Census (1971)

Figure 5.6 The relationship between functional status (as measured by number of retail outlets) and population size of civil parishes in North Norfolk



Source : Fieldwork (1975) and Census (1971)

CHAPTER SIXTHE CASE STUDIES OF SOUTH NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
AND NORTH NOFOLK6.1 Introduction

In Chapter Four we considered the application of planning policies to rural settlement in England. The following Chapters develop this aspect of the study further by investigating the impact of policies of selected village development on settlement in rural areas. Such an investigation requires study at a level of considerable detail. It was clear at an early stage of the research programme that this would only be practicable (given the finite resources of the scheme) if specific case studies were examined.

Earlier, in Chapter Three, the terms 'pressure' and 'remoter' rural areas were introduced. The planning problems of the two types of area are essentially the same, differing principally in scale not type. These distinctions of scale are, nonetheless, very important. Consequently, if the conclusions of this research are to have any application to rural areas other than those of the case studies themselves, it is essential that both pressure and remote rural areas should be examined. This necessitates at least two case study areas.

6.2 Selection of case study areas

The choice of the case study areas was determined by the need to fulfil three basic requirements:

- (a) One area should be a distinct example of a pressure area, the other of a remote rural area.
- (b) Both chosen areas should be subject to a policy of selected village development. This policy should preferably have been applied to the areas for a minimum of at least ten years.
- (c) The two areas should be broadly comparable.

These were relatively simple requirements but in practice it was found that they limited the choice of prospective case study areas. The pressure area was the first to be chosen. Three pressure counties with particularly long experience of selected village development are East Sussex, County Durham and Nottinghamshire. Nottinghamshire was the obvious choice of these three on the basis of convenience, but there were additional factors militating against the use of the other counties. In the western half of County Durham there were considerable areas which were distinctly 'remote' in nature. In addition, the pressure areas of the county differed from the characteristic model of metropolitan fringe areas because of the special influences of mining in the area. East Sussex also contained large areas which were not characteristic of pressure areas. In perspective, Nottinghamshire was not a perfect choice as a pressure area. Large areas to the north-west of the county were heavily influenced by industrial and mining development and experienced severe problems of structural decay¹. However, the remainder of the county was suitable for selection as a pressure area, and this was especially true for the area chosen for the case study, that part of the county

lying south of the Trent (See Figure 6.1).

The selection of a remote area was partly determined by the choice of the case study for a pressure area. South Nottinghamshire was a lowland area with a distinctly nucleated settlement pattern. It was important that the chosen remote area should be comparable with South Nottinghamshire on at least these two basic elements. This immediately restricted the number of potential counties. Investigations of the population trends of the English lowland counties for the periods 1951 to 1961 and 1961 to 1971 produced the following list of potential case study areas: Cambridgeshire, Dorset, Shropshire, Somerset, West Suffolk, Wiltshire, Cornwall, West Malvernshire (former Herefordshire), Lincolnshire and Norfolk. The first six counties were considered unsuitable because of the limited or fragmented nature of the remote areas within their administrative boundaries. This indicated potential problems of collecting census information within the counties. Cornwall was rejected because of the obvious disparities between a coastal county in which tourism constituted a fundamental element of the local economy, and South Nottinghamshire, a landlocked area in which tourism was relatively insignificant. The former county of Herefordshire was not distinctly lowland in nature but was in fact rejected because of the apparent disparities in the settlement patterns of this county and South Nottinghamshire. Rural settlement in Herefordshire is typically dispersed with small nucleations. Consequently, the choice for the case study of a remote area was restricted to Lincolnshire or Norfolk. Central North Norfolk and South West Lindsey were considered to be the most suitable case studies within these two counties. These two areas seemed equally

suitable. Eventually the Norfolk example was selected on the basis that a working relationship had already been established with the county planning department in that county. The study area is defined in Figure 6.2.

6.3 The Research Approach

Information to be collected in the case studies fell into four principle categories:

- (a) Demographic information.
- (b) Economic information.
- (c) Patterns of shopping, servicing and recreation.
- (d) Attitudes to the village community and to development in the respective settlements.

With such a varied information base it was clear that several data collecting techniques would need to be used. A less obvious consideration, but one that was integral to the research methodology, was the need for this information to be collected at two distinct levels: the general, for all villages in the study areas; and the specific, for a few villages studied in special detail.

To illustrate this distinction we take the example of demographic information, much of the required data could be collected either from published material from the Registrar General's decennial census surveys, or from computer listings of the census enumeration district material². Some other information, such as data concerning the length of residence of individual households in villages, can be obtained only by questionnaire survey. Occasionally such

surveys are undertaken by county planning authorities through commissioned market research agencies or planning consultants³. More usually, if such information is required it must be collected by the individual researcher. This introduces a fundamental distinction in the information sources. Material from the census could be collected at the level of each civil parish in the case study areas. In contrast, it was possible to obtain information which needed to be collected by questionnaire survey, given the limited resources of this study, for only a few selected communities.

The need for a questionnaire survey was found in all four information categories. This introduced a methodological division between the collection of more general information at the level of the individual civil parishes, and the questionnaire survey designed to extract more specific data from only a few villages.

6.4 Sources of general information

General information, collected for all the villages in the case study areas, was gathered by a variety of techniques and from several sources. Three sources were of particular importance:

- (a) Field work.
- (b) Census enumeration district data.
- (c) Local government sources.

Field work in the two case study areas was the principal technique used to establish the pattern of social provision. The relative distribution of retailing, servicing and recreational facilities was established by visiting each village and recording the basic data.

This enabled both the number of establishments and their functions to be recorded fairly simple, and accurately. This field work was of supplementary use in recording brief details of village morphology and of the scale of development in all the villages. In addition, visits to each community gave the author a general knowledge of the area and its constituent settlements. This was of particular value in the interpretation of some of the results of the research and in the development of other research techniques.

The planning departments of both Nottinghamshire and Norfolk County Councils granted access to enumeration district data of the 1971 census. Generally, the enumeration districts used by the Registrar General in the decennial census coincide with individual civil parishes, although in some of the largest villages one civil parish may include several enumeration districts. This enables some of the general census information to be collected at the level of individual settlements, except where one civil parish encloses more than one settlement. The amount of information presented in the enumeration district volumes was fairly limited in respect of the total needs of the survey. Nonetheless, important basic information on the demographic composition of enumeration districts, patterns of tenancy and car ownership were collected. This information was of particular use as it was based on a census of the communities. The degree of error incurred in the census survey was obviously far lower than that in the questionnaire survey, which mostly used sample fractions of the whole population.

There was some duplication of information collected in the questionnaire surveys and that contained in the enumeration district volumes. Although the dates of these surveys were not strictly

comparable (Census, 1971; questionnaire 1974/5 for South Nottinghamshire and 1975 for North Norfolk), this nonetheless permitted a broad assessment of the degree of error and thus the validity of the questionnaire survey.

Finally, the enumeration district volumes provided details of the total number of households in the villages, from which sample sizes could be assessed for the questionnaire survey of the study villages. Again, there was a temporal distinction between the two surveys, but this was thought to be an insignificant distortion to the design of the sample frame.

Local government sources provided a variety of other information. The county planning departments were of principle importance. These provided a variety of general data concerning the two case study areas, such as the distribution of piped water, mains drainage and other public utilities. These departments were also able to define those locations in South Nottinghamshire and North Norfolk for major projects of 'public' capital investment. Social service departments provided information on the distribution of relevant facilities in the area. Finally, the education authorities were able to contribute information on the distribution and structure of educational facilities in the two areas and on policy regarding their reorganisation.

There was relatively little published information relating to all settlements simultaneously in the survey areas. Planning reports were of some value in this respect but often tended to be out-dated. Such reports were of minimal use without the perspective introduced by personal contacts with the planning officers respons-

ible for them. Another source of information general to the areas were the published public transport timetables for the relevant companies serving the case study areas.

6.5 The selection of settlements for questionnaire analysis

Assuming that statistically valid samples were to be interviewed in the villages, it was clear that only a few of the constituent settlements in the case study areas could be chosen for questionnaire analysis. This established, it was decided that the most appropriate stratification for the survey would be one based on the groups of villages defined by the official planning categories. This was not a perfect choice. As a functional grouping the planning categories were of little use (as we discussed in Chapter Five). In addition, there was the problem of overlap in South Nottinghamshire, with a few settlements belonging to more than one category⁴. Nonetheless, the over-riding consideration was that a study investigating the impact of planning policy on rural settlements in two areas should follow the village grouping established, and used, by the planners as their basis for decisions relating to those areas.

It was decided to select the settlement most representative of each category and to focus the questionnaire survey on these. The distinction between the term 'most representative' and the other term 'typical' which it perhaps implies, must be recognised. To choose a village 'typical' of the group implies that there is a certain homogeneity of character in each planning category. This is not the case in most of the planning categories (as was established in Chapter Five). Nonetheless, there are certain broad

characteristics common to most of the settlements constituting a given category. Consequently, one can select a settlement as being the most representative of such characteristics without implying that the settlement is typical. This distinction, if subtle, is nonetheless important in the analysis of the results of the survey. Results derived from a typical settlement could be applied to the whole group as accurate generalisations. In this case, however, the results of the surveys of the most representative settlements can only be assumed to be accurate (interview and sampling errors excepted) for the settlement surveyed. These results can only cautiously be suggested as generally applicable to the situation in other villages of the same planning categories.

A quantitative approach was first considered as a possible basis for the selection of villages. The use of factor analysis was investigated, as a technique for establishing the settlement most representative of each group. This would have analysed a large number of variables for each of the settlements constituting each category. From this it would have been possible to establish the settlement which most closely approximated to the mean for the category in each of these factors. The technique has been successfully used in the rural settlement context elsewhere⁵, but was found to be unsuitable in this study due to the small range and number of variables available (through information constraints). We have already noted that the information documented in the enumeration district volumes was limited. Outside the Census, little information was available which presented data for all the settlements in the case study areas. In addition, field survey could only provide a

relatively narrow range of data. Consequently, only a small range of variables was available. There was also the further problem that much of the potential data for factor analysis variables, was recorded on the basis of enumeration districts and not individual settlements. This effectively eliminated many of the smaller villages and hamlets from consideration by factor analysis.

Non-metric multi-dimensional scaling was investigated as a possible quantitative basis for selection of the villages to be surveyed. The technique investigates the inter-relationship of any number of spatial locations in respect of individual values for given variables. The variables are non-metric in nature, i.e. they do not follow an ordinal mathematical scale. This non-metric aspect considerably extended the number of available variables. The technique is relatively new in spatial statistics and has no specific parallels. Multi-dimensional scaling (MDS) is an advanced technique described in the basic texts by Kruskal ⁶. However, as with factor analysis, MDS is unsuitable for the selection purpose. The problem of variables relating to enumeration districts and not to individual settlements is once again important, but in addition settlement selection would use both metric and non-metric data, and MDS techniques are unsuitable to combine analysis of both variable types.

The third and last attempt to establish a quantitative selection of the prospective survey settlements was based on an extension of simple multi-variate principles ⁷ to construct a ranked index of 'representativeness'. Basically a limited set of variables were chosen. The mean for each variable was calculated for each planning

category and the constituent settlements of each category ranked (in descending order) on their closeness of fit to the mean for each variable. An index was calculated for each settlement:

$$I_g = \frac{(R_1, R_2, R_3, \dots, R_n)}{N}$$

Where I_g was the index for village g ; R_1, R_2, R_3 begin the rank values for n variables; and N being the number of settlements in the given planning category. The lowest value of I_g represented the 'most representative' village.

This method had a number of drawbacks. As with the two previously reviewed techniques there was the problem of the spatial arrangement of the data. In addition, the accumulation of ranks procedure allowed individual variables to assume a disproportionate importance, thereby reducing the practical validity of the final index. Consequently, this technique was also discarded.

The eventual assessment of the villages to be selected was made by a very simple method. This was essentially a subjective approach, modified by consideration of one key variable, population size. This variable was obtainable from the 1971 census volumes. Where several settlements formed one enumeration district or where other distortions of the census material occurred, it was possible to establish a variable value for each individual settlement by using county planning estimates⁸. The mean population size for each planning category was then calculated. Those settlements in the category which were considered to be unrepresentative of the

mean were discarded. The remaining settlements were subjectively assessed and one selected for the survey. In practice this assessment was relatively simple, with all but one or two of the settlements being discarded on the basis of some discounting factor or factors. The moderate growth centre category in North Norfolk provides a clear example of this process. This category⁹ contained six settlements. The mean population size of these was 665.7. This allowed three settlements to be discarded: Briston/Melton Constable (1,782 pop.), Langham (219) and Little Snoring (311). Of the remaining settlements, Blakeney was discarded partly because of its coastal position (all the other settlements were inland centres) but specifically because of its status as an exclusive resort (the other five villages were not significant centres of tourism). Sculthorpe was discarded because of its proximity to the small market centre of Fakenham. Sculthorpe is 2 miles from Fakenham whilst the other villages of the group are much further from such centres (mean distance 8.33 miles). This in itself would not be a discounting factor but investigation at Sculthorpe indicated that the village functioned largely as a dormitory of Fakenham, with very few shops or services, or recreational facilities of its own. The remaining village of this category, Great Ryburgh, was considered to be the least atypical of the group.

Population size is the obvious key variable to chose. Many other factors are at least partly influenced by the population size of a given settlement; the number and functional range of shops and services, recreational facilities, and leisure patterns are more obvious examples. In addition, other factors such as accessibility are affected by population size through the frequency and

route pattern of rural public transport. Probably no other single key variable is more suitable. It is important that a key variable should be used in this selection process to guard against a completely subjective assessment which might be affected by elements of unintentional personal bias.

The selection technique may seem very elementary. Given the salient problem of a lack of variety in accessible data relating to rural areas, this is inevitable. The objective of this selection process is only to suggest those settlements which are reasonably representative of the planning group to which they belong, and which are not unduly affected by any significant distorting factor. Within this limited viewpoint this method is valuable. If there were a large number of villages in a given planning group, or relative homogeneity of the constituent settlements, then it is doubtful if this method would be of much value. However, neither of these circumstances occurs in either of the case study areas (or commonly elsewhere).

6.6 The questionnaire surveys

The questionnaire absorbed a disproportionately large amount of time in this study in relation to the actual amount of information collection by this method. Nonetheless, the questionnaire surveys collected a variety of information essential to the research scheme and which could not be otherwise collected.

Participant observation offered a possible alternative for the collection of much of the material of this part of the case study surveys but was considered unsuitable for the purpose of this

survey through the essentially non-quantitative basis of information obtained by such methods.

Having accepted the necessity for a comprehensive questionnaire survey it was decided to investigate the possible overlap of the proposed survey with two similar surveys recently completed in one of the case study areas. A socio-economic survey of rural Nottinghamshire was commissioned by the county planning department in 1973. The survey, however, was based on the use of very small samples from each of the settlements in the county. This made the data collected by this survey of little use for the purposes of this research. The second survey was undertaken in 1966 by the Department of Agricultural Economics of Nottingham University. This was a very extensive survey and of more potential use to this research scheme. However, the directors of this survey used haphazard sampling techniques. In addition, the survey was nearly ten years out of date. Consequently this material was not used.

The design, testing, collection and analysis of the questionnaire surveys is a matter of fundamental importance to this research and cannot be adequately considered here. Appendix Four discusses these matters in detail. Only the sampling procedures are considered in detail here.

The foundation of a good sample survey is the sample. While not every survey that uses proper sampling methods will provide adequate data, a study that does not do so will be seriously impaired from the outset. In this context the procedures for choosing the size of the sample population to be interviewed in the villages and the constituent households, assume a critical importance to the

whole research scheme.

The first recognised use of sampling in social surveys was by Bowley in 1915¹⁰. Sampling procedures have subsequently become much more complicated, and the subject of a relatively extensive and numerate social science literature¹¹. The sample for this survey was stratified on the basis of twelve separate villages, seven in South Nottinghamshire and five in North Norfolk. These villages varied quite considerably in size, from East Leake (South Nottinghamshire), with a population of 4,720 in 1971 (1,479 enumerated households), to Brinton (North Norfolk), a village of twenty-eight households with approximately seventy people. With such variation it was clear that a single sample proportion could not be applied to each of the villages. Consequently, a variable sample size was applied to the twelve villages. This raised the problem of what sample size would be selected for each of the settlements to be surveyed.

It is a simple common sense principle that the error generated by a given sample is indirectly proportional to the absolute size of the sample, and to the proportion this constitutes of the total population. In this context it is desirable to interview the largest possible sample from each of the villages. However, the limited resources of this research scheme necessitated the interviewing of as few households as possible. In practice these two contradictory requirements were balanced by choosing the smallest sample size for each village that would provide reliably accurate results in the questionnaire survey. In some situations this 'minimum viable sample size' can be found quantitatively. This numerate approach has fost-

ered a variety of literature and some controversial quantitative issues which are of little significance here ¹². Broadly, such an approach requires detailed information or estimates concerning details of the total population. In addition, this numerate approach is generally related to surveys testing one element of a given population, for example car ownership patterns or household income levels, and not to multi-objective surveys such as this. Consequently, a quantitative selection of the respective sample sizes was impracticable for the purposes of this survey.

The issue of sample size was discussed with Dr. Giggs of the Department of Geography at Nottingham University and subsequently, in more detail, with Mr. Silvey, a sampling specialist in the Department of Applied Social Science, Nottingham University. On the basis of principles established by Mr. Silvey's study of villages in the Gurney Valley ¹³ and on later experience, it was decided to select variable sample sizes for the villages to be surveyed in South Nottinghamshire and North Norfolk, related to minimum viable sample size. Two criteria were used:

(a) That the minimum sample proportion should be ten per cent. It was considered that the range of social groups to be found in a given rural community would not be proportionately represented in a sample size of less than ten per cent. Subsequent experience in the first of the case study areas, South Nottinghamshire indicated that this critical value could be lowered for surveys in very large villages. Consequently, a seven per cent sample was applied to Fakenham in Norfolk (population 4,467) on the basis of this experience.

(b) That the minimum absolute sample size should be twenty-five households. This was applied for the same reason as the minimum sample proportion. Sample settlements with twenty-five or less households were surveyed by 100 per cent samples. This minimum absolute sample size, incorporated an enlarging factor to account for the non-response rate in questionnaire surveys.

The sample sizes that were eventually chosen are listed in Table 6.1.

Having established the sample sizes it was necessary to review the possible techniques for selecting those households that were to constitute the samples. The basic requirement of the household selection process was that it should define a sample of households which formed a representative cross section of the various social groups in the villages. Such a sample would form the basis for prediction of specific patterns and characteristics that were general to the village communities. Some element of probability sampling was required and the most suitable was simple random sampling techniques. The special qualities of simple random sampling, which suggest its use in this survey, have been defined by Warwick and Lininger¹⁴:

"... simple random sampling is a process of sample selection in which the units are chosen individually and directly through a random process in which each unselected unit has the same chance of being selected as every other unit on each drawn".

Before the households could be chosen it was necessary to define a convenient sampling frame from which they could be selected. In practice two frames were suitable for the purposes of this survey, the local authority rating records and the register of electors. The former frame was less accessible than the latter and in addition generated the problems of:

(a) The inclusion of non-dwelling property in the list. This survey concerned only the residential property. The problem could have been easily overcome¹⁵ in the rating records but was non-existent in the electoral register.

(b) The absence of specific addresses for recorded property. Rating records in many rural areas often do not give the address of some property. This is a considerable problem for mail questionnaires and one of some inconvenience for interviewers collecting questionnaires by field-work methods.

Consequently, the electoral register was chosen as the frame for this survey. This is the most commonly used sampling frame for surveys of this nature but it is not without some problems of use:

(a) The register is permanently out of date. The register is compiled each October and published the following February. Consequently, the register is four months out of date when it first becomes available to the public and sixteen months out of date when it is eventually replaced, as there are no revisions of the register in the twelve months that it is current. Using the register as the sampling frame

it was found that few very recent migrants (people who had moved into the village within the previous two years) were selected.

(b) A small proportion of the adult population are not registered. Gray¹⁶ found this to be about four per cent of the total adult population and it is usual to disregard this small figure. In addition, about two per cent of the adult population are ineligible to register, and 0.6 per cent are wrongly registered twice. These small proportions are also generally disregarded.

(c) Using the register as a sampling frame a sample of addresses is drawn. These are not uniformly consistent with households. Gray and Corlett have estimated that about six per cent of dwellings contain more than one household¹⁷. This figure is less significant in rural areas where multi-household dwellings are less common than in some urban areas. This situation is confirmed both by the enumeration district information of the 1971 census and by the experience of collecting the questionnaires.

(d) Gray and Corlett¹⁸ have shown that through the composition of the electoral register, households with several registered adults have more chance of being selected in a random process than others. Consequently, the sample may be biased in favour of multi-adult households. A complex weighting factor is proposed to overcome this possible bias in the previously mentioned literature. It was decided that

this weighting factor would not be merited by the very limited amount of bias in these relatively small village samples. In the event, this decision was justified by the experience of questionnaire collection. Very few multi-adult households were drawn in the samples and it was considered that any bias that did exist was insignificant. In addition, the subsequent testing of the validity of the samples through comparison of the age structure of the sampled population with that of the total village populations (from enumeration district sources in the 1971 census) indicated no obvious bias in favour of multi-adult households.

The rating records also incorporate the problems of being outdated and giving a sample of addresses and not of households. The distinctive problems of using the electoral register as a sampling frame are therefore restricted to registration anomalies and to the possible bias in favour of multi-adult households. Neither of these problems introduced any apparent significant bias in the samples. Consequently, the electoral register was both a convenient and reliable sampling frame.

Addresses were chosen from the register by using random number tables. This was the most reliable method of selecting unbiased, random samples. The random number tables used were produced by Dr. McCullagh of the Department of Geography at Nottingham University through an elementary computer programme. The table is reproduced as Table 6.2. The random digits in this table may be used singly, in pairs or in larger groups, as required.

The reliability of the samples selected by this procedure was tested by comparing the results in the civil parish used in the pilot survey, with comparable data for the same civil parish in the census enumeration district volumes. The 'key' variable chosen for comparison was the age structure of the population of the civil parish. There was a temporal distinction between the compatibility of the two data sources which we should recognise, since the pilot survey information was collected in June, 1974, and the census relates to 1971. This distinction was inevitable because no comparable information that was contemporary to the pilot survey was available. It was considered that in none of the surveyed villages would a four year time lag cause major changes in the age structure, but nonetheless a quantitative assessment of the standard error of the sample was not possible. The sample for the pilot survey in the village of Wysall (South Nottinghamshire) gave an age structure very similar to that for the village from the more complete 1971 information. When all the surveys were completed the sample for each village was tested in the same manner. Only in one village was there a significant difference between the test variables. This was the village of Barton in Fabis (South Nottinghamshire) in which the distinction was apparently caused not by error in the sample but by profound changes in the age structure of the community brought about by post-1970 changes in the housing structure of the village. The samples of two villages could not be tested because they constituted respective parts of a single enumeration district.

The reliability tests were an important feature of the survey methodology but the issue of sample validity cannot be left without mentioning the problem of small cell sizes. The tests of reliability indicate that the samples we have chosen are statistically valuable, although to test this comprehensively we would need to use a multi-

factoral procedure which would require a greater range of information about the village households, the 'population at risk', than conventional statistical sources could supply. Nonetheless, the absolute number of households from any given study village is quite small. Although for most of the villages this is an inevitable function of their size, it does mean that we must be careful in the results of the survey, and particularly when considering differences between the villages, about attaching meaning to small differences in the results. This problem of small cell sizes also restricts our use of statistical tests of significance in assessing inter village and intra-village (perhaps between different social class groups) differences. Consequently, tests of significance have generally been restricted to an assessment of the statistical level of confidence for associations at the level of the study areas.

6.7 Summary

Case studies were a fundamental element of the whole research scheme, constituting local examples of the impact of settlement planning policies and development control on rural settlement. Two case study areas were chosen, one from a pressure area, and the other from a remoter rural area. The case study areas selected were respectively, South Nottinghamshire and North Norfolk, as defined by Figures 6.1 and 6.2.

The problem of paucity of documented information characteristic to rural areas in this country, necessitated information being collected at two levels in these case studies. General information was collected for all the settlements in the areas, whilst most of the specific information could only be collected for certain settlements by use of a household questionnaire survey. The selection of those settlements for

special study constituted a considerable problem for the case study methodology. One village was chosen from each of the settlement planning categories, with the exception of the 'restricted development' categories in South Nottinghamshire which constituted two rather different groups of villages and where two study villages were chosen (one from each of the sub-groups). This gave us twelve study villages. These settlements are illustrated in plan form in Appendix Five.

The design, testing, collection and computer analysis of the household questionnaire survey are considered more fully in Appendix Four. This was a particularly lengthy and involved aspect of this research study, the most complex element being the sampling procedures which are considered in detail in this chapter.

FOOTNOTES

1. See, for example the description of this in:
Nottinghamshire County Council, *Nottinghamshire Structure Plan: Draft Report of Survey* (1976), pp. 177 - 192.

2. Enumeration district material can be purchased from the Registrar General's Office in the form of comprehensive computer listings. Relevant data are presented in separate volumes of 'household', 'population' and 'employment' information. Most county planning departments, and some of the larger districts, purchase these volumes for their own research purposes, and these are usually made available, on request, to scholars.

3. Such surveys are not commonplace. In addition those county authorities which do institute such surveys are restricted by few trained staff, restricted research facilities, and finite financial resources (where surveys are commissioned from commercial specialists or consultants). Consequently the size of samples in individual villages tends to be reduced to such an extent as to make the results statistically unrepresentative of individual communities. Surveys such as these tend only to describe the general pattern and characteristics of the rural area and pay little attention to the individual settlements. One of the more notable examples of such a survey is the report on *Village life in Hampshire*, published by Hampshire County Council (1966) and commissioned from Mass Observations Ltd.

4. The rural settlement policy established for villages in South Nottinghamshire defined six planning categories. The 'conservation village' category contained several individual villages and in addition small conservation areas in other villages (the remainder of such settlements being classified in one of the other planning categories). This unusual situation caused overlapping in the categorisation policy.

5. D.L.Reay, *Some problems of village classification: With special reference to N.W.Durham*. B.Sc. Dissertation. University of Nottingham (1971).

6. J.B. Kruskal, 'Multi-dimensional scaling by optimising goodness of fit to a non-metric hypothesis'. *Psychometrika* 29 (1964a), pp. 1 - 27.

and:

J.B. Kruskal, 'Non-metric multi-dimensional scaling: A numerical method'. *Psychometrika* 29 (1964a), pp. 115 - 29.

7. For more detailed knowledge of multi-variate principles as applied to social science, see:

J.S. Coleman, *Introduction to mathematical Sociology* (1964).

8. The population estimates of county planning departments are notoriously crude but the degree of error involved is not significant in this utilisation.

9. This represents categories (i) and (ii) of the 1974 *Interim settlement policy*. In 1975 the Norfolk County Planning Department was revising this interim classification. Discussions with Mr. Ayton

of that department suggested that in the light of this impending revision it would be more realistic to merge these two categories.

10. A.L. Bowley and A.R. Burnett-Hurst, *Livelihood and poverty* (1915).

11. A basic text which has not been dated by more recent quantitative developments is:

T. Corlett and F. Edwards, 'Sampling methods, in British Market Research Bureau Ltd.,' *Readings in market research* (1956), pp. 13 - 29.

The more advanced, numerate texts used in this survey, and to which the reader is directed for further information; are:

W.G. Cochran, *Sampling techniques* (1963),

F. Yates, *Sampling methods for censuses and surveys* (1971).

C.A. Moser and G. Kalton, *Survey methods in social investigation* (1971), pp. 61 - 210.

D.P. Warwick and C.A. Lininger, *The sample survey: Theory and practice* (1975).

12. For details see:

C.A. Moser and G. Kalton, op cit (footnote 11), pp. 146 - 52.

13. J. Silvey and B. Silburn, *Gurney valley villages study* (1971).

14. D.P. Warwick and C.A. Lininger, op cit (footnote 11), p. 76.

15. For details see:

C.A. Moser and G. Kalton, op cit (footnote 11), p. 159.

16. P. Gray and T. Corlett, *Sampling for the social survey* (1950).
17. P. Gray and T. Corlett, op cit (footnote 16),
18. See in particular:
P. Gray, T. Corlett and P. Frankland, *The register of electors as a sampling frame*. Government Social Survey No. M.59 (1950).
and
P. Gray and T. Corlett, op cit (footnote 16).

Table 6.1 The sample sizes selected for the village surveys

Study area	Village	No. of enumerated households in the 1971 census	Sample proportion	Actual sample size (households)
	Fakenham	1,553	7%	109
	Great Ryburgh	148	20%	30
	Stiffkey	113	25%	28
	Sharrington	42 ¹	60%	25
	Brinton	28 ¹	100%	28
TOTAL SAMPLE				220
	Wysall	73	35%	26
	East Leake	1,479	10%	148
	East Bridgford	470	10%	47
	Barton in Fabis	67	40%	26
	Normanton	121	25%	30
	Kinoulton	209	15%	31
	Thoroton	36 ¹	100%	36
TOTAL SAMPLE				344

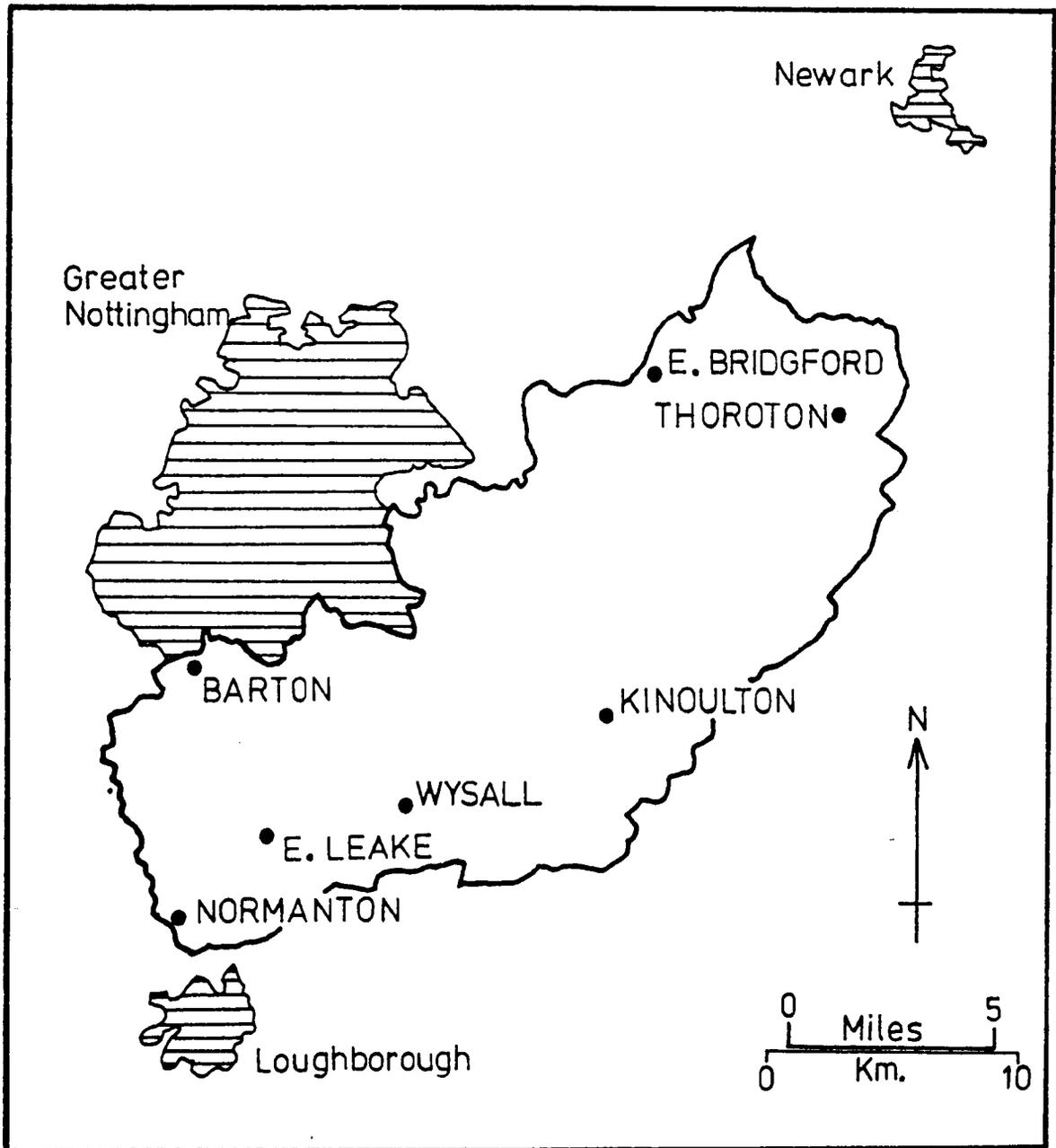
1. The household totals for the villages of Sharrington and Brinton in North Norfolk and for Thoroton in South Nottinghamshire were estimated from field survey and not taken from the 1971 census due to discrepancies between the civil parishes (the unit of survey) and the enumeration district areas.

Table 6.2 Random Digits as used for selecting the households to be interviewed from the sampling frame.

The digits in this table may be used singly, in pairs or in larger groups, as required.

9141347578073244470114027044012445599033
 2134734689885844623834132403552407621320
 7230907243192373371953114284428467245223
 4447212133222926243472134856142012284630
 5324303046183783431856041415977864338089
 8720370127139808587971740308496143861684
 8672029145397149685559297568227246346677
 5977742661599512141954917246994731574633
 3706956503410920995161586003881838043203
 4332533750121378534640238848929035479215
 3496075830757689078339205677095294217402
 8291245210948590497996070648997483796594
 0567064059069083044302061059168420049025
 4292253672059555613953021897688879599966
 0551756796627767724491106876178787629943
 1261454349114868589377602061982546608058
 1267747991372508349960339340819459455759
 3687298230362662030712123929144622213895
 3463219456175096465695199224636832347813
 0275197536852721084221383559901753923021
 9197183837811976963142343900407443148202
 4282487106710506655638081478416597152352
 1694614710154026776791474082352173333264
 0981130141747360371508311102399151341002
 9380465675640435976659832968168031104257
 4863506651763872196002343729061509310063
 5927707670131994199479481107246023722804
 6154177066644172513230175071014924542036
 9042738056848283882239918246868835830954
 7430017297401849499688172134419518064187
 8279040519834738969051609448049684089516
 1617077469351606677588649675260604026014
 1446690657553681427712165555730247425615
 2415687885886446046293943849742715598634
 5007540567151380668912558637966592924393
 3547351955886818655215671055416936564867
 6620083112225856808017832392700865101764
 1339657139464305478562740701152441542125
 0161248933314867080650060226638423048905
 4482438933314867080650060226630423048905
 4482435430695849400778627558500275690418
 8169395065430881389275708263136772481569
 2047719646152398949977654321423116415374
 1586555075376157916164011165784779771930

Figure 6.1 The case study area of South Nottinghamshire



● The study settlements

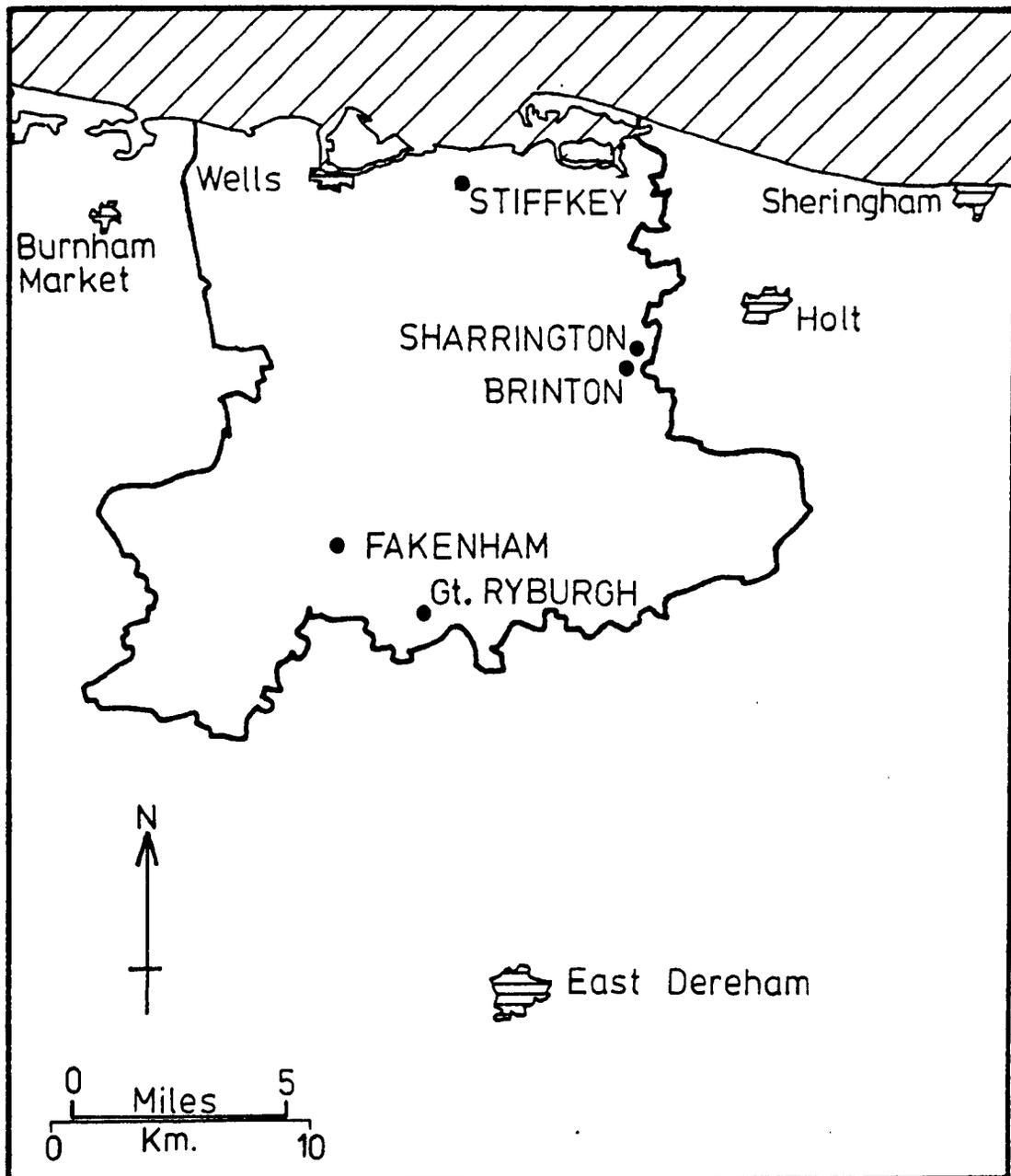


Adjacent major urban areas



The boundary of the study area (as defined by the boundaries of the Rushcliffe local government district - excepting the urban area of West Bridgford).

Figure 6.2 The case study area of North Norfolk



- The study settlements
- ▤ Adjacent large settlements
- ⋈ The boundary of the study area (as defined by the former Walsingham Rural District)

CHAPTER SEVENRURAL SETTLEMENT AND OFFICIAL PLANNING CATEGORIES7.1 Introduction

In England virtually all of the county planning authorities use a system of 'planning categories' as a basis for the control of development in rural settlements. Generally each county defines a small number of official planning categories. These are collectively known as a classification system. Respective rural settlements within the relevant administrative area are then allocated to these categories. Planning categories are usually defined on the basis of the extent or type of development that is envisaged within the constituent settlements. Consequently, there are categories for, amongst others, 'growth villages', 'minor growth villages', 'conservation villages', etc. The mechanics of this system of rural settlement classification have been explained in Chapter Four.

In practice, the number of categories in a rural settlement classification scheme varies from one county to the next. So, too, do the actual terms for, and the definition of, the categories. More important, though, are the actual distinctions beyond the formal frame of the classification systems. Planning categories act only as guidelines to the control of development in villages and hamlets. This allows considerable freedom in development control decisions on the part of the local planning authorities, as to how the development restrictions of the different planning categories are interpreted. Consequently, even in those counties with similar classifications there

are often quite remarkable differences in the interpretation of development restrictions ¹. To put this more simply, the amount of development permitted in the minor growth villages of county X may be considerably more, or less, than that permitted in the minor growth villages of county Y, depending on how the planning officers and committee members of the relevant local planning authorities interpret the definition of the planning category. It almost goes without saying that such differences of interpretation are not random phenomena but are strongly influenced by the structure of rural settlement in the county, a large range of social and economic pressures and also by the political outlook of the planning committee and the chief planning officer. These may vary considerably from one planning authority to an adjacent authority, leading to important contrasts across some administrative boundaries.

Classification systems are a standard response to a perceived need for a framework for controlling development in villages. However, the standardisation of planning categories goes no further than this because the classification schemes of the English counties, although they may be superficially similar, are effectively unique to each county.

We have noted before (in Chapter Four) that much of the basic development control in rural settlements in England now falls onto the shoulders of the district planning authorities. At the moment, within a given county area, the different district authorities generally tend to follow a common classification. This is a legacy of planning practice prior to local government reorganisation in April, 1974 (when the Local Government Act of 1972 came into effect), when

development control was the responsibility of the county planning authorities (see Chapter Four). Since 1974 the district authorities, with their newly devolved powers, have tended to work to those rural settlement classification schemes established by the county planning authority. This might be seen as inertia on the part of the districts, because there is no statutory obligation for the new district authorities to comply with the county classification (although the law is vague in this area). More recently, however, some district planning authorities have proposed amendments to the classification schemes within their administrative area. In some cases these may amount to independent classifications. If this is the case it would represent a move towards further fragmentation of the classification system.

This chapter is concerned only with the differences between the classification schemes of different county authorities, and seeks to review inter-county distinctions and the implications for the spatial pattern of new development. It is intended to do this by examining five case studies.

7.2 The case study counties

The five counties which were chosen to be the case studies for this part of the research were:

- (a) Huntingdonshire (now part of Cambridgeshire)
- (b) Isle of Wight
- (c) Norfolk
- (d) Nottinghamshire
- (e) West Sussex

Norfolk and Nottinghamshire were chosen because considerable research in the schemes of rural settlement classification in these two counties was required for the more extensive use of parts of these counties as target areas for the questionnaire survey (see Chapter Six).

Three more counties were chosen to act as case studies. These were selected so as to give a reasonable cross section of settlement types and population density and character, and also to illustrate particular aspects of the use of categorisation as a tool in rural settlement planning. It was not important to this section of the research that the selected counties should together form a group that was representative of all or most of the English counties (if indeed this was at all possible). Huntingdonshire, the Isle of Wight, and West Sussex were selected as the other three counties.

The system of classification in each of the five study counties was defined by the most recent published statement of rural settlement policy, at the time of study, that was available for the whole of the respective administrative areas. These were:

- (a) Huntingdonshire: *Rural Settlement Planning Policy*, 1974. Hunts. and Peterborough County Council.
- (b) Isle of Wight: *County Development Plan. Report of Survey, First Review*. 1962.
- (c) Norfolk: *Interim Settlement Policy*. 1974. Norfolk County Council.

(d) Nottinghamshire: *Plan for Rural Nottinghamshire. Parts One to Five*. Published separately by Nottinghamshire County Council and respective rural districts from 1966 to 1969.

(e) West Sussex: *Report on Rural Community Structure*. 1965 (Unpublished), and: *Existing Planning Policies for the New West Sussex County Council*. 1973. (Unpublished at the time of use).

The variation in dates between the different policy statements was not significant to this element of the study.

7.3 Categorisation

The variations that exist between the classification systems of different counties are a fundamental element of selected village development in England. Such variations are caused by many different factors of which only the most important can be discussed in this study. Differences in local conditions and needs are fundamental factors, but so, too, is the political response to these. This suggests an important aspect of categorisation, namely that human factors as well as physical circumstances are reflected in rural settlement classification schemes. For example, there are considerable differences between the physical pattern, structure and situation of rural settlement in the English counties and such distinctions are bound to bring about differences between the schemes of categorisation as developed by local planning authorities. Equally important, however, are the human elements in the various demands put on the resources of given settlements: development pressure is an obvious example of this.

There are other human factors which can influence systems of village classification. Earlier settlement classifications in a given county may influence the development of the existing system. Huntingdonshire provides a good example of this process. In 1972 the County Planning Department developed a revised classification of villages ². This revision replaced a five-fold system of categorisation with one with only three categories. This revision was undertaken so as to account for changes that had taken place in the county in the ten years since the original classification had been developed. Consequently, one might have expected this revision to represent a positive change in the rural settlement classification. In practice, however, the only change was to amalgamate the three lower categories of the 1962 system into one category in the revised system. This may simply reflect the fact that the county planners were satisfied with the pre-existing system, but it may also reflect, at least in part, inertia in the planning department or reluctance for change on the part of the planning committee.

A further example of the impact of human factors is the influence on systems of categorisation of relevant regional planning proposals, and of sub-regional planning reports.

7.4 The selection of villages

Once a classification system has been established an assessment must be made of the appropriate category in which to place the individual settlements of the administrative area. The allocation of villages to settlement categories is carried out by planning officers

but may be subject to acceptance by the Secretary of State through the formal channels of structure plan approval. In practice this assessment is an examination of the development potential of each settlement. In principle this would take into account the physical and financial constraints to development in the individual settlements, and also the needs and desires of the relevant communities. A review of the selection criteria of the five study counties indicates that the following factors are important in this process of category allocation:

- (a) Environmental quality
- (b) Provision of educational facilities
- (c) Community facilities
- (d) Shopping facilities
- (e) Public utilities (notably the provision of waterborne sewerage systems)
- (f) Accessibility to urban centres
- (g) Land availability
- (h) Freedom from physical constraints to development (e.g. floodplains, subsidence risk, etc.)
- (i) Agricultural land constraints
- (j) Accessibility to, or the provision of, employment.

These factors are not listed in order of priority; in fact, their relative importance varies from one county to the next. For example, accessibility to urban centres is far less important as a consideration in Nottinghamshire and West Sussex which are comparatively metropolitan counties, than in Huntingdonshire or Norfolk

in which villages are characteristically more remote from urban centres and urban facilities. Generally, however, four factors are of critical importance in the selection process: educational facilities, water-borne sewerage facilities, land availability, and freedom from physical constraints to development. These factors are of over-riding importance particularly in the selection of 'growth' villages. The assessment of development potential on the Isle of Wight provides a clear example of the relative importance of these four factors. The first review of the County Development Plan in 1962 classified ten villages as suitable for major development. Amongst these, the villages of Shalfleet and Newchurch were interesting selections. The shopping facilities of both settlements were limited to a small general store-cum-post office, and additional services and community facilities were minimal. Furthermore, the distance of these villages from the main towns and urban facilities on the Island was large, by local standards. The only mitigating factors in the 'development potential' of both communities were that each had a primary school and mains sewerage facilities with spare capacity. Shalfleet and Newchurch are comparatively extreme examples of the influence of these four factors in village categorisation, but they are certainly not exceptional examples. In the same case study area there are four other 'selected villages' (Brading, Brightstone, Godshill, and Niton) which were little better off for basic facilities than either Shalfleet or Newchurch. Once again, however, each of these four villages had a primary school and a water-borne sewerage system which either had existing spare capacity or was capable of expansion with little capital investment. None of these selected villages had significant land constraints.

This situation in the Isle of Wight was largely repeated in the other four survey counties. Issues such as the environmental quality of particular settlements, community and shopping facilities, and accessibility to the main towns and sources of employment, tended to be of subsidiary importance to the critical factors mentioned above. In the context of the earlier statement concerning the assessment of development potential, it is quite clear from the observation of these five counties that growth villages are selected on the basis of physical and financial constraints, with little respect being paid to the 'needs and desires of the community'. The importance of physical constraints is a product of limitations such as flood plains, bogs etc, and also of various building and development regulations. This reflects the land-use orientation of contemporary planning legislation (as discussed in Chapter Two).

Financial constraints can also be seen to be a reflection of statutory requirements. At a very basic level of analysis, development in a village means more people and thus more children. Under the Education Acts local authorities have an obligation to provide educational facilities for the school population of their administrative area. With limited financial resources it is obviously more practical for local authorities to direct the location of development, where possible, to settlements in which an existing school has spare capacity or which can be relatively cheaply expanded to create spare capacity. This is true only for primary education. The wider catchment areas of secondary school facilities allows greater spatial flexibility in the location of development.

The importance of sewerage facilities is also a reflection of statutory requirements in building regulations, although here a strong element of long term cost-efficiency and popular appeal is important in focussing on water-borne sewerage systems. As with schools, it is clearly more practical for local authorities to guide development to those locations where sewerage facilities can be provided with the least capital investment. The influence of this single factor can be seen in many thousands of villages throughout the country. The high capital investment necessary for the provision of a water-borne sewerage system to individual villages has tended to make progress since the Second World War in the extension of 'mains drainage' to rural settlements in England a slow process. Consequently, many smaller villages (and a disturbing proportion of not so small villages in some remoter areas) remain dependant on septic tank facilities. All of these villages tend to be restricted to "infill only" development. The same influence can be seen in some of the larger communities, the rapid development of which has often tended to outstrip the extension of existing sewerage facilities.

The village of East Leake in Nottinghamshire provides an interesting and not uncommon illustration of this process. Here the village sewerage facilities are dependant on the treatment plant located a short distance outside the village (see Plate 7.1). This community has grown dramatically in the last fifteen years (from 2,856 in 1961 to 4,720 population in 1971) and is now using the maximum output of the existing treatment plant. Further development in the village will require the construction of a much larger treatment plant. With restraints on capital investment in public facil-

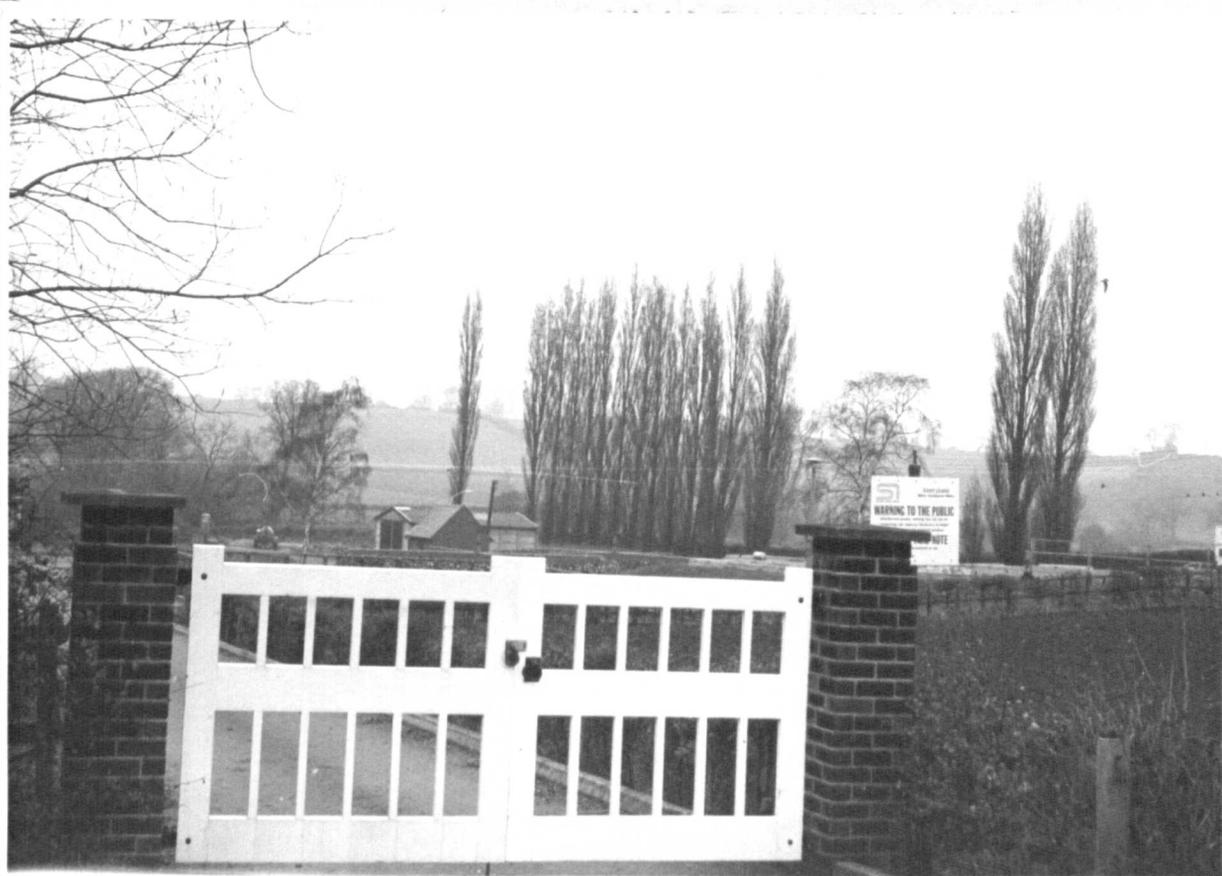


Plate 7.1 The East Leake sewerage treatment plant

The existence, or otherwise, of spare capacity in sewerage treatment plants in rural areas is one of the most important determinants in the planning system of both settlement categorisation and development control. Rapid residential expansion in the selected village of East Leake has meant that this treatment plant is now working at full capacity, and in the absence of a written intention from the Water Authority to expand the treatment capacity, this effectively means that there is an embargo on major residential development in this selected centre.

ities: this means that East Leake has effectively reached its maximum permissible size until a new plant is built.

A final reflection of the importance of this sewerage factor is the widespread acceptance in the villages, that the provision of a water-borne sewerage system in a village previously dependant on septic tanks, results in the expansion of that village. An example of this was found in a mains drainage extension programme in South Nottinghamshire in 1973/4. Some residents in the affected villages fought quite bitterly against this provision on the basis that it would cause extensive development in their settlements.

To summarise the selection factors, there is an apparent weighting against social and amenity factors in the village selection process. One cannot avoid the conclusion that this is largely the result of a lack of statutory regulation in this area. The provision of shops, local services, libraries, youth clubs, etc., to areas of new development is not a legal requirement. Additionally, the concern for amenity factors in village selection lacks the consideration which it merits. This does vary considerably from one area to another, a product of the intensity of development pressure in an area, and of local political issues. Amenity considerations are also an important element in contemporary planning legislation and might thus be expected to play an important part in the selection process in settlement classifications. This is not the case, however, perhaps because amenity (unlike pressure for schools and sewerage facilities) is a factor which cannot be easily quantified, particularly in financial terms. Gregory has examined this phenomenon at greater

length³. This may also be a contributory factor in the reduction in the significance of social considerations in the village selection process, in the absence of any defined standards of social and community facilities.

Two other factors are of significance in the process of settlement categorisation in rural England. First, contemporary schemes of village categorisation often follow the same framework established by any earlier schemes. Planning authorities frequently review their schemes (a statutory obligation), but subsequent overhauls of the system are much less common.

The second factor is very difficult to assess objectively. This is the planning philosophy (such as it is) of members of the appropriate planning committees, and also the values and ideas of the chief planning officers. The degree of influence on individual categorisation schemes is difficult to measure, but certainly in some rural areas this is an influence which cannot be underestimated.

7.5 Categorisation in the study counties

Table 7.1 shows the general policy framework for the study counties. Only the Isle of Wight does not employ a rigorous system of categorisation. This is principally because of the small number of settlements that are enclosed in the Isle of Wight planning authority area. There are only fifty-two nucleated settlements on the Island, so the planning authority considers that only the growth villages needs to be defined and that further categorisation is not required. This system is feasible on the Isle of Wight where planners

are dealing with a very small number of rural settlements, but it would be quite impractical in most larger areas, for example Norfolk with 612 separate nucleated settlements.

The remaining four counties of this study all employ a system of rural settlement categorisation. Table 7.1 shows that each system of categorisation was quite different in type. In addition, there were deeper, less apparent distinctions which are briefly summarised below.

(a) Huntingdonshire: Development pressure within the county led to the adoption of a system of rural settlement categorisation in 1962. The policy report which introduced this, *A rural policy for Huntingdonshire*, established a hierarchy of five planning categories. In 1972 a revised classification of three groups was approved by the County Planning Committee⁴. This new classification was given a more detailed context by the use of policy statements for each rural settlement in the county. In practice it was these statements, or in the case of some larger villages, the village plans, which acted as guides to the development capacity and related issues in the individual settlements. This system is very uncommon in schemes of development control in rural settlement in England. Many local planning authorities prepare village plans for the large, selected, villages but it's rare for this technique to be followed to its logical extension by preparing policy statements for all villages and hamlets within the respective administrative areas⁵.

(b) Norfolk: The system of categorisation employed in Norfolk is notable in that the larger growth villages are classified in the same planning category as the small market towns of the area. This classification seems to recognise the close association of the functional roles and the planning problems of the large 'growth' villages and many of the smaller market towns. Few other authorities officially recognise this important association in rural settlement classification schemes. In many cases small towns are considered as distinct from the large growth villages because of old local government divisions which classified many small market towns as urban districts or boroughs. This meant that town plans could be prepared for these settlements. In addition these small towns had a far greater political influence, on planning matters, than did the parish councils of the large growth villages. In some areas there is also a distinction of size between the large growth villages and the small market towns and this has tended to promote their separation. In Huntingdonshire, for example, the largest growth village had a population of 3,943 in 1971 (Yaxley) whilst the two small market towns of the county, Ramsey and St. Ives were 5,646 and 7,148 respectively. Nonetheless, such 'urban' centres are more closely related to rural than urban status. In addition, these centres have been shown to share similar planning problems to the larger growth villages ⁶.

The Norfolk classification is an interim policy, awaiting a complete review of the system and of the philosophy of categorisation by the County Planning Department. This interim policy was established in February 1974, but as the revision is not completed it is this temporary system which is still in force

(up until the time of writing).

(b) Nottinghamshire: The classification of settlement groups for this county is more complex than in any of the other five counties. Broadly, however, the classification follows similar principles to those evident in other schemes of categorisation. There are villages selected as growth centres and, others selected for more modest development, but for the bulk of the villages a more restrictive policy is proposed. To this extent the classification is little different from that employed in many other counties. However, there are two important divergences in the Nottinghamshire system.

First, the classification is complicated by the existence of a Green Belt around Greater Nottingham. Inside the Green Belt area, villages are subject to special development control measures and the County Planning Authority has responded to this distinction by subdividing both the 'Growth' and 'Development Restricted' categories into those villages inside the Green Belt and those outside.

Secondly, there is a separate 'conservation' category for villages of special environmental quality. This is termed the 'Special Amenity' category. Many other county authorities have created similar conservation categories. In a statutory context this strengthens the hand of the local planning authority in controlling the often formidable development pressure on such villages. Nonetheless, the control of

development in these settlements is still not on a par with the stringently restrictive policies applied to villages lying within the boundaries of the National Parks ⁷. None of the other study counties has created a similar conservation category for villages of particular environmental quality. This is not to suggest that the other county planning authorities have little regard for the conservation of such villages or, indeed, that they have either no villages worth preservation measures or none that is under development pressure. In these other study counties there is a genuine concern for amenity preservation within the planning authorities, but it is considered that environmental and amenity issues relating to particular villages can be adequately considered within the existing system of development control.

In Nottinghamshire the settlement classification is implemented through a series of joint policy reports with the appropriate district authorities. In all there are five rural reports ⁸, prepared between July, 1966, and June, 1969, each related to a specific rural area of the county. The temporal differences between these reports and a process of progressive revision of the classification has led to some minor distinctions between the classification systems of each report. The system shown in Table 7.1 is consequently a composite categorisation policy.

(d) West Sussex: The classification for this county has, in this author's experience, a unique status. In May, 1965, the County Planning Department prepared a report on rural community structure within the county area. This was one of a number of reports prepared for the first review of the County Development Plan. This rural report⁹ proposed that the authority should adopt a system of rural settlement categorisation based on three categories. These would act as a general framework within which specific development applications could be considered. This was a thorough report for it went on to define the three proposed categories and to establish a division of settlements in the county into this classification. At this point, however, the further development of the proposed system (which required both County Council and Ministerial approval) was suspended. The First Review was never submitted to either the County Council or to the Minister. Uncertainty over the proposals for the Gatwick Airport area in the context of the controversial 'regional growth axis' scheme, caused the submission of the review to be delayed. Uncertainty continued and the submission delay was extended indefinitely. Consequently the proposed rural settlement classification was never formally adopted. Since 1965, however, this classification has been used as a formal guide to the control of development in West Sussex villages. The classification has also been the basis for the preparation of a number of village plans (local plans). Nevertheless, in the context of planning legislation this classification has no statutory validity, as it has never been approved by either the Minister, or subsequently the Secretary of State. This situation serves to

underline the basic fact that planning categories are used principally as a guide to determining the outcome of development applications, albeit an important guide. If this were not the case then the West Sussex system of development control in villages would, to quote a planning officer at the county planning office, "... have been shot to pieces years ago by the DoE". This also reflects how it may be more convenient for local authorities to use schemes which have not been submitted to DoE for approval. Approval by DoE gives statutory force which cannot be altered without formal reference to the Department. Consequently, schemes which have not been submitted for approval (where it is possible for local authorities to legally do this) are more flexible.

These case studies have shown the magnitude of the differences between the classification systems of the five counties. This reinforces the statement made earlier in this chapter that classification systems are, effectively, unique to each county.

7.6 Comparisons of the study counties

Figures 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, and 7.5 illustrate the location of selected and non-selected villages in the study counties. The differences of scale of these maps tend to conceal what are otherwise quite profound differences in the spatial pattern of categorisation in these counties. There is consequently a need for a quantitative description of these distinctions. The following analysis uses a number of simple numerical techniques to fulfill this need.

For the purposes of this study the analysis focussed on the selected village categories only, as these are the corner stone of a rural settlement classification.

Three simple quantitative measures were used to compare the spatial structure of categorisation in the five counties:

- (a) The ratio of selected villages to all villages, where:

$$\text{Ratio } R_v = \frac{N_{sv} + K}{N}$$

Where N_{sv} is the number of selected villages defined in the current classification scheme for the respective counties and N the total number of rural settlements in the administrative area of the county. K is a factor applied to each calculation and is explained in full below.

- (b) Selected village to total 'rural' population ratio, where:

$$\text{Ratio } R_p = \frac{\text{Pop}_t - \text{Pop}_u}{N_{sv} + K}$$

Where Pop_t is the total population of the county in the 1971 census and Pop_u the population of the urban areas in the county (centres with a total population of above 10,000).

The limits of time did not allow this study to account for many of the varying factors in different classification schemes. For example, this assessment did not account for the very different standards of selected villages in these counties. Some selected centres were capable of acting as important local service centres, for

example, Bembridge on the Isle of Wight, Fakenham in Norfolk, Bingham in Nottinghamshire, Steyning in Sussex, and Yaxley in Huntingdonshire (to name only a few). In others the village facilities were little above the standard of small villages. Such differences occur within counties and also between counties. The selected villages in both West Sussex and Nottinghamshire were virtually all significant local centres with a wide range of facilities. In the other counties such centres were the exception rather than the rule. Whilst this was obviously an important element in settlement classification schemes, it was not considered possible to account for it in these simple numerical techniques. Nonetheless, it was considered important to eliminate one important factor in the inter-county distinctions. This is described as factor K in the formulae above.

Factor K is related to the small county towns that we have earlier discussed. Small county towns are an important element in the pattern of social provision in rural areas. The work of H.E. Bracey, amongst others (described in Chapter Five), has illustrated this. We have noted that their function is very similar to the larger selected villages which they resemble in many ways. However, it is an anomaly of classification systems that few county authorities officially recognise this similarity. One exception is Norfolk, which we have already discussed. However, systems of classification may take account of the location of these small market towns when selecting growth villages and it is vital that we allow for this in this analysis. Factor K is therefore defined as the number of settlements that are not classified as villages but which have a population (in the 1971 census) of under 10,000 (this threshold is suggested by the Council for Small Industries in Rural Areas, see Chapter One to this thesis). The inclusion of factor K in the calculations allows for greater compatibility between the results for the five study counties.

It follows from this discussion that these two density measures are relatively crude numerate techniques. If their limitations are recognised, however, they do facilitate a simple and effective quantitative comparison of the classification systems of the counties studied.

The results of the calculations for ratio R_v are shown in table 7.2. With the notable exception of West Sussex the index values show a remarkable degree of polarisation around the two extremes of 4.8 and 5.4 for the Isle of Wight and Nottinghamshire, and 12.6 and 12.8 for Huntingdonshire and Norfolk, respectively. This indicates a considerable difference between the standards of selected village/rural centre densities in the counties. The significance of the polarisation of these values is difficult to detect. It may represent a real distinction in the selected village philosophy adopted by the local planning authorities. Alternatively, a difference between the settlement patterns of the counties and of the housing demands placed upon them could result in one local authority needing to selected fewer growth villages than another. Either or both of these explanations are feasible in this situation. However, the number of counties studied is too small to be able to form general conclusions.

The results for the R_p ratio do not reflect this polarisation (see table 7.3). The mean R_p value for all the counties is 1:7,463 but the individual values range from 1:3,813 for the Isle of Wight to 1:10,679 for West Sussex. This indicates a far greater degree of variation amongst the counties studied than was the case for the R_v ratios. Since we are studying a small number of counties it

is not realistic to draw any specific conclusions from these figures. The value of these results is in providing evidence, in a simple numerical form, for the wide degree of variation between the classification systems of different counties brought about by individual approaches to categorisation.

The third quantitative measure used in this analysis was a modified version of the standard nearest neighbour statistic. This measured the distances of non-selected rural settlement from selected villages, and towns. In an ideal situation the locational pattern of selected villages would supplement the existing urban service centres so as to produce an optimum pattern of social provision in a given rural area. It was clear before this test was conducted that such an ideal, optimum pattern would not exist, because location was not the only factor determining the actual choice of selected villages. Nonetheless, there were signs from the spatial patterns represented in Figures 7.1 to 7.5 that individual counties varied considerably in the 'locational efficiency' of their settlement classifications. The nearest neighbour analysis we designed to give a numerate basis for a more objective comparison of the studied counties.

A note of reservation should be added at this point, as with the R_v and R_p ratios. This nearest neighbour statistic is not an absolute test of the efficiency of given selected village development systems. These calculations are based only on the distance parameter and it is quite clear that there are many other parameters, some unquantifiable, that would need to be considered in an absolute test of the efficiency of a classification system. Even as a test

of locational efficiency this statistic has some deficiencies. For example, the test considers only nucleated settlements. Individual, isolated farms and cottages are not considered. This is a reflection of the need for a simple, easily calculated statistic, but it does highlight the limitations of the statistic for detailed comparisons (which will not be attempted here).

The nearest neighbour index is fundamentally a simple numerical technique (for a more detailed account see, for example, Cole and King¹⁰). For the purposes of this study the index is calculated by:

$$I = \frac{\Sigma(D_1 + D_2 + D_3 \dots D_n)}{N}$$

Where D_1, D_2, D_3 , etc., are the distances from the villages 1, 2, 3, etc., to their respectively nearest service centre (town or selected village). This distance is calculated for every non-selected village and hamlet in the study area. N is the total number of settlements for which the statistic is calculated. It is important to note at this point that the distances measured are linear distances, i.e. 'as the crow flies', and are thus considerably less than actual travelling distances. Table 7.4 presents these results as the percentages of the total number of villages and hamlets falling within each distance category. The Table also presents the mean Index for the individual counties.

The statistics in Table 7.4 indicate a considerable variation between the five counties. The results for the Isle of Wight are not strictly comparable with those for the other counties partly

because several of the 'selected villages on the Island cannot be expected to act as important service centres for their neighbouring villages and hamlets and this effectively distorts the results. Nonetheless, the figures for the Isle of Wight reflect the apparent care taken in choosing the locations of selected villages. No village on the Island is more than three miles from a town or selected village. This remarkable pattern is only partly a consequence of geographical advantage and of categorisation anomalies.

The mean values for the Index for the other counties do not show a wide range of variation. However, as a generalised statistic this obscures some real distinctions that are shown by the percentages. These latter figures show a very similar pattern in West Sussex and Nottinghamshire. The results for the other two counties, Norfolk and Huntingdonshire, show a poorer pattern of proximity to rural and other service centres. The situation in Norfolk is partly a product of the low density of selected villages and urban centres in the county (see Table 7.2). Consequently, only 6.7 per cent of the villages and hamlets in the county are less than one and a half miles from a selected village or town. As would be expected, however, this proportion rises to a level closely resembling that in West Sussex and Nottinghamshire when one takes into account the four and a half mile cohort. As a test of locational efficiency, albeit a limited one, this indicates a positive response from the Norfolk planning authorities to a situation of geographical disadvantage.

The statistics for Huntingdonshire indicate a poor locational pattern. Nearly one village in four is more than four and a half miles (linear distance) from a selected village or town. This is nearly double the same proportion of any of the other counties. Figure 7.1 indicates that a contributory factor in this pattern is the notably uneven distribution of selected villages in the county. Consequently, there are many villages in the Bedford North Levels and around the valley of the River Til, north-west of Graffham Water, that are long distances from centres with adequate shopping facilities and basic services. This is hardly a situation which would be expected in one of the lowland counties of Midland England and it reflects the consequences of an uneven pattern of selected villages or a lack of association of this pattern with the location of towns. There are many factors which help to bring about this pattern in Huntingdonshire. It is not appropriate to give a full critique here. However, for the purposes of this study it should be noted that a contributory factor is a concentration on the technical aspects of village selection. This has tended to detract from the distributional factors. The consequence has been a settlement classification with a profound imbalance in the spatial pattern of servicing.

7.7 Standards of density and distribution in village selection

The absence of any formal, or informal standards of density and distribution of selected villages is a contributory factor in the wide variations found between the five counties. This might lead us to suggest that the adoption of rigorous standards to which all systems of rural settlement classification were to conform, and

which were enforced directly by appropriate Parliamentary legislation or (more practically) indirectly by appropriate DoE circulars to local planning authorities, would rectify the situation. Whether or not this would follow, assumes the status of a purely academic question, because as the following discussion explains, the imposition of clearly defined, absolute standards would be quite impractical.

The three simple techniques that we have used to compare the settlement classifications of the five counties studied have shown that there are, indeed, considerable differences in the density and distribution of selected villages in these areas. These differences are partly a consequence of the wide variation in the physical circumstances between the five counties. For example, the ratio of selected villages to all the villages in a given area would be quite different in an area of dominantly dispersed settlement as opposed to an area of generally nucleated settlement. Yet the average number of people served in both areas could be the same. There are many other ways in which the simple physical characteristics of an area can affect the density and distribution of selected villages.

Selected villages are a fundamental element in the pattern of social provision in rural areas. In principle, they act as intermediate centres between the services and facilities offered by towns and those offered by the village store. The variations in the categorisation systems of different counties can therefore represent real differences between the levels of social provision

in the respective rural areas. It follows that a move towards the equalisation of standards of density and distribution will be a positive step towards improving the standard of social provision in many rural areas. We have previously discussed the importance of physical circumstances in determining variations between county classification schemes. Logically these offer less potential for influencing an equalisation of standards than variations caused by 'human' factors. These human factors can also be important influences on inter-county distinctions. For example, the level of development demand, as perceived by the local planning authority, will influence the number of villages that are selected as growth villages. The amount of spare development capacity and the number of outstanding planning permissions will exert a similar influence. In addition the distribution of selected villages will be profoundly affected by the number, size and location of urban centres. These are only the most basic factors. Together, the physical and human factors introduced here combine to make the situation in each planning authority area unique. It is as well to bear this in mind when we talk of 'equalising' standards of selected village distribution and density.

Given this wide variation in the physical and human circumstances of rural areas it is clear that standards of selected village density and distribution would either have to be very flexible in nature or would have to allow considerable flexibility in their interpretation. This authors' experience suggests that the degree of flexibility needed, would be so great as to invalidate the actual use of such standards. If absolute statutory standards were introduced this would lead to one of two results in most

rural areas. Either the standards would require a reduction in the number of selected villages, which would eventually result in a real decline in the standards of social provision in rural areas (assuming that the distribution of finite capital resources in affected rural areas continued to be largely related to the selected villages), or statutory standards would require an increase in the number of selected villages in certain areas. This latter consequence would be widespread and in practice this would lead to the designation of many villages, otherwise unsuited for large scale development, as selected centres. This would result because, although there are some counties where spare capacity for the selection of additional growth villages may exist, most counties could not designate many more selected villages without an extended capital investment programme (in sewerage facilities, etc). The overall result would thus be more widespread development in many rural areas which would normally have experienced development on a more modest scale. Assuming that a dramatic increase in the existing levels of investment were not feasible, more widespread development would result in further stress on rural facilities which are already often overburdened. Environmental objections to the designation of unsuitable settlements as selected rural centres would be obvious, as would local objections from the residents of affected settlements.

The imposition of standards of selected village density and distribution would thus be socially and economically undesirable, and politically and practically unrealistic. This conclusion would apply to the vast majority of local planning authority areas in rural England.

7.8 Settlement classification and social provision

The relationship between categorisation and the distribution of social and economic facilities in rural areas was briefly considered in Chapter Five. Whilst Chapter Eleven provides more detail on social provision, some relevant expansion is necessary here.

The previous discussion has shown that wide variations in the practical application of rural settlement classification schemes exist between different planning authorities. This has more than purely abstract significance as an observation of geographical distinctions between counties, because the different classification schemes influence the local patterns of social provision. This is a direct reflection of the spatial pattern of capital investment in rural areas, which is focussed on the selected villages.

We have already seen that the written classification system of different county authorities are often quite similar. The distinctions that occur between counties are essentially a product of the physical and human background to classification in the county and to the practical application of these classification systems through the process of categorisation. This is especially apparent for the selected villages themselves, and it is these selected villages which are the key to this discussion.

The development pressure in a given rural area and the limited financial resources of a local authority are, as we have seen, largely directed towards the selected villages. This leads to the maintenance of existing facilities in such communities and often also to the



Plate 7.2 New shopping units in East Leake

This photograph, together with Plate 5.2, indicates two examples of the expansion of the service base of this settlement associated with its planning status as a 'selected' village.

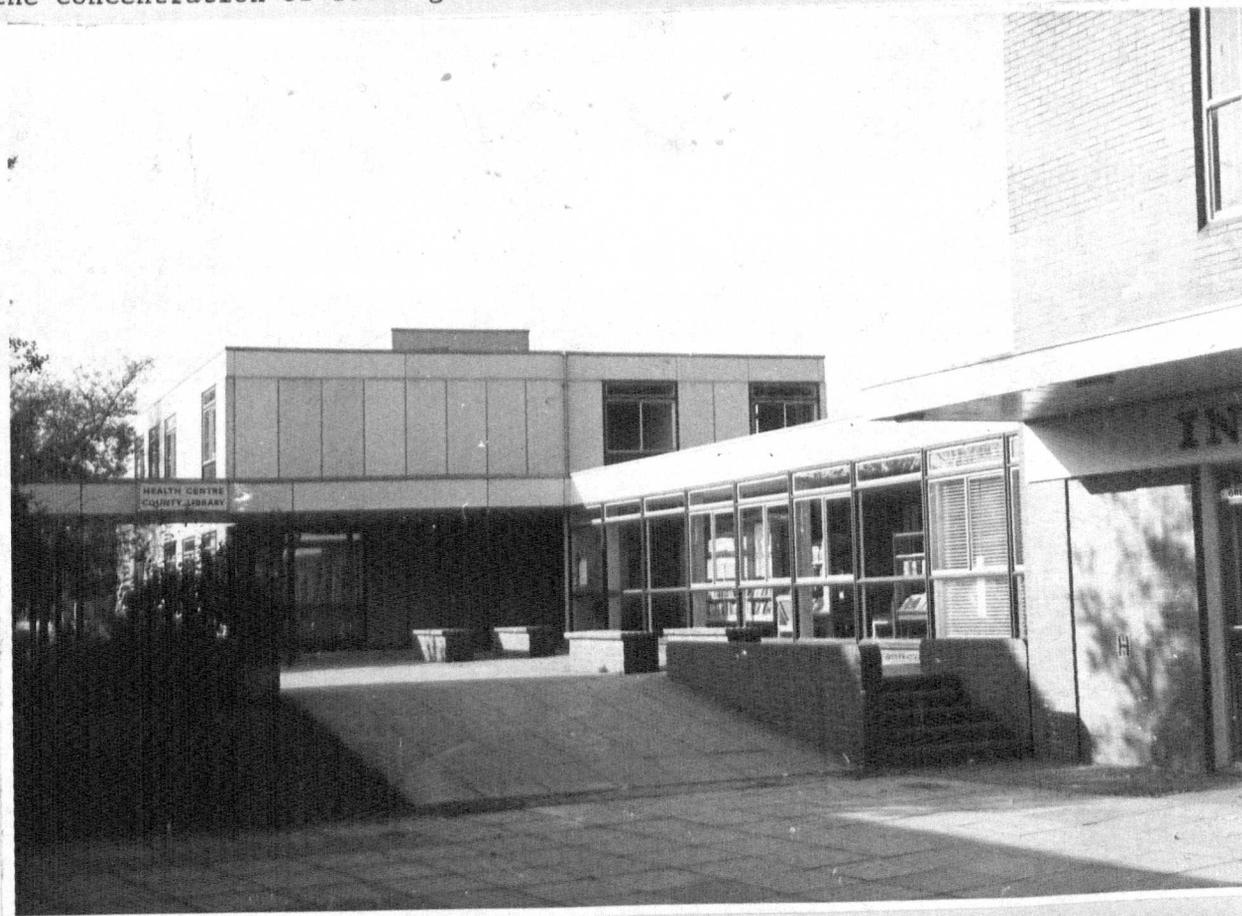


Plate 7.3 The new shopping precinct at Bingham

This precinct represents a further expansion of the already extensive shopping facilities in this selected village

Plate 7.4 The new library and health centre at Bingham

These buildings represent new premises for established services, and not new services in the village, and were provided as part of a comprehensive re-développement of a central site which included the new shopping precinct (Plate 7.3) and car parking facilities. This provides another example of the concentration of local government investment in selected centres.



extension of the service base in these settlements. Plates 7.2 to 7.4, show examples of new facilities provided in the villages of East Leake and Bingham in South Nottinghamshire. Selected villages can act as locations for social provision in rural areas, of intermediate status between the towns and the smaller villages. In a system of sympathetic location of selected villages this may do much to offset the decay in the standards of provision provided by the smaller villages. Additionally, through the concentration of development on the selected villages proportionately more people will be living in communities with good facilities. In contrast, in a system where the categorisation process is less sympathetic this will usually lead to large areas which can look to no intermediate centre of social provision and which are therefore comparatively deficient in basic facilities.

Throughout this discussion we have stressed the importance of the physical circumstances in bringing about differences between the classification process of different county authorities. It follows that some counties are better placed to provide a more 'sympathetic' system than others. For example, in West Sussex the historical pattern of development has provided the county with a comparatively high density of large villages and small market towns, most of which had extensive facilities long before the county planning authority adopted a philosophy of selected village development. A similar geographical advantage exists in the Isle of Wight. Here, too, the density of rural centres with good facilities is comparatively high (in respect of its small geographical area) and the structure of social provision in the area has the considerable

spatial advantage of a near central location of the principle market town of the Island, Newport. Differential advantage is, therefore, quite common and important. Ideally, however, it should be a factor which accounts for the different degrees of success in individual categorisation processes and not an excuse for the failure of many schemes. Geographical advantage is not a pre-requisite to a successful classification scheme. The example of Norfolk in the nearest neighbour analysis has shown that a near optimum locational pattern for selected villages can be produced in a situation where the physical circumstances in the county, place the local planning authority in a situation of disadvantage.

Standards of social provision continue to decline in rural areas. Selected village development can do little to stem the deterioration of facilities in the many smaller villages of rural England. However, by developing centres of intermediate status much may be done to offset the impact of this decline on the rural population. This discussion has suggested, however, that for this objective to be achieved considerable care must be given to the choice of selected villages particularly in respect of the consequent pattern of location. However, it is clear from the foregoing case studies that the locational pattern is not an important consideration in the process of categorisation. The selection of settlements rests largely on factors relating to the individual suitability of certain settlements with too little attention being paid to how settlements fit into the overall spatial context of the classification scheme. In those areas of natural physical advantage, such as West Sussex or the Isle of Wight, the locational factor can be justifiably underplayed. In other counties, however, this can only be done at the expense of creating areas deprived of many facilities. In counties where a

grossly uneven pattern of social provision is created or perpetuated, such as the case study of Huntingdonshire, this must be seen as a very dark shadow on the potential success of the classification system.

It would be misleading, however, to give the impression that planning officers and planning committees are completely unsympathetic to the selection of villages. We are considering this only in the light of social provision. In other respects such as development control and the protection of amenity, classification systems are more generally successful. In the actual mechanism of selection, planning officers exercise much thought in the innovation of better techniques of assessing the development potential of individual villages. In addition, there are some counties in which proximity to improved social facilities has generally improved through the development of classification schemes. Where the categorisation of settlement is less successful this would seem to be largely a product of the land use orientation of contemporary planning legislation. The structure of the existing legislation within the context of the planning system does not promote consideration of social issues. This is a fundamental observation about the structure of planning rural settlement in England and will be discussed in the context of 'social planning', more appropriately at the end of this thesis.

The structure of the decision making process in town and country planning also limits the degree of freedom which planning officers have to construct an ideal categorisation system. It is currently popular to criticise planning officers for many of the controversial decisions in planning. In many cases the blame is

either misconceived or is directed inappropriately. However, here we must recognise that the responsibility for unsympathetic selection cannot totally be assigned to sources other than planning officers themselves. These are the architects of systems of categorisation and thus must share some responsibility when the systems are faulted. However, it is the system which breeds the planners and not vice versa. Within the context of this very broad, but nonetheless accurate, generalisation we must re-emphasise that planning law has deficiencies.

7.9 Summary

In Chapter Four the basic principle of settlement classification was introduced and briefly described. This chapter examines classification systems in more detail. The principles of settlement classification remain broadly similar in the English counties. In practice, however, the application of classification systems through a process of categorisation brings about considerable differences in the consequent spatial pattern of village selection. It is fundamental to a discussion of selected village development in England to describe the extent of these differences and to understand the processes which cause these distinctions.

This chapter attempted only a brief analysis of the differences between the categorisation processes of different planning authorities. Five counties were studied to provide a framework for the analysis and to provide a detailed aspect to the study.

Both human and physical factors in the circumstances were important in the design of a system of classification. In the process of settlement categorisation there were ten factors which were found to be important in the five study counties. Of these, four factors achieved a disproportionate significance: the provision of facilities for education (particularly primary or first school), the provision of a water-borne sewerage system, land availability and the freedom of potential development land from physical constraints. All of these factors were critical in the categorisation process because of statutory regulation through planning, building and education legislation. Social and amenity factors are of much less importance.

The classification systems in four of the five study counties follow fundamentally similar principles. The exception was the Isle of Wight whose small size allowed the planning authority to consider the smaller settlements individually, therefore dispensing with the need to define categories for these settlements. The authority nonetheless defined a selected village category (a reflection of the need for statutory backing in the case of disputed decisions concerning local villages, being taken to the DoE for appeal).

Much of the discussion relied on a qualitative assessment of the situation in the five study counties. It was considered that three simple quantitative tests should be used to determine the extent of inter-county distinctions in the application of the classification systems. These numerical techniques were recognised to be of limited value for detailed analysis but were considered to

be adequate for the exploratory purposes of this study. These calculations illustrated that the differences between the study counties not only exist but in each case are remarkably pronounced. No general conclusions were developed from this numerical assessment because it was considered that the range of counties studied was too small in number to be able to substantiate such conclusions.

The discussion finally centred on the influence that the system of categorisation can have on the standards of social provision in rural areas. The full role of the 'key' village in the concept of selected village development can only be realised in respect of social provision if planning authorities adopt selection policies which focus not only on the development capacities of individual settlements but also on the overall location strategy of selected villages. In many areas this is not the case and this can create areas of deprivation of facilities in some counties. This is a consequence of unsympathetic categorisation which is the product of a variety of factors but largely of limitations in the overall, and not local planning systems, notably in respect of the land use orientation of contemporary planning legislation.

FOOTNOTES

1. This distinction has been investigated in the villages of the Vale of Belvoir. The Vale includes villages in the South Nottinghamshire case study area and others over the county boundary within the administrative area of Leicestershire County Council. This investigation was restricted to studies of the Leicestershire villages of Harby, Hose, Long Clawson and Nether Broughton. An assessment of development control in these villages was contrasted with the situation in the adjacent Nottinghamshire villages of Granby, Langar, Hickling and Upper Broughton. These villages were chosen for their compatibility. All are of a similar size and share roughly similar physical circumstances. Most important of all, each village was categorised for 'restricted development' within the respective county classification schemes. The sole exception was the village of Colston Bassett which was classed as a 'special amenity village' and therefore subject to significantly more restrictive development control measures. It was clear from this investigation that development control had been more restrictive in the Nottinghamshire villages. This distinction was true at the time of the survey in early 1974 but may have subsequently changed as development control became the delegated function of district and not county planning authorities in April 1974.

2. Huntingdonshire and Peterborough County Council, *Rural settlement planning policy* (1972).

3. R. Gregory, *The price of amenity* (1971).

4. Huntingdonshire and Peterborough County Council, op cit (foot-

5. At least one other county authority has committed itself to a policy of preparing separate policy statements for each village. This is Cheshire, see for example:

Cheshire County Planning Department, *Planning for rural Cheshire* (1973).

6. East Anglia Economic Planning Council and Norfolk County Council, *Small Towns Study*, (1969).

7. Settlements lying within the boundaries of the National Parks are subject to more stringent development control measures. This was initiated in 1949 with the 'National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act'. In this Act provision was made "... for the nation's benefit and by appropriate national decision and action: ... buildings and places of historic interest are suitably protected." In each of the National Parks a 'Park Planning Committee' is responsible for development control in the villages and other settlement of the area. This is a semi-autonomous local planning authority and its political 'isolation' from non-National Park areas probably tends to increase the stringency of development control restrictions in Park villages.

8. The five following reports were all prepared by the Nottinghamshire County Planning Department in liaison with the appropriate local authorities:

Nottinghamshire County Council and Eask Retford Rural District,
*Plan for rural Nottinghamshire : Part One, East Retford
Rural District* (1966)

Nottinghamshire County Council and Worksop Rural District,

Plan for rural Nottinghamshire : Part Two, Worksop Rural District (1966)

Nottinghamshire County Council and Newark and Southwell Rural District's, *Plan for rural Nottinghamshire : Part Three, East Area* (1967)

Nottinghamshire County Council and Basford and Bingham Rural District's, *Plan for rural Nottinghamshire : Part Four, South Nottinghamshire* (1967)

Nottinghamshire County Council and Southwell Rural District, *Plan for rural Nottinghamshire : Part Five, Central Nottinghamshire* (1969)

9. West Sussex County Council, *Report on rural community structure* (1965).

10. J.P. Cole and C.A.M. King, *Quantitative Geography* (1968), pp. 186 - 192.

Table 7.1 The schemes of rural settlement classification in the five study counties

HUNTINGDONSHIRE :

Category A ... Major growth villages

Category B ... Minor growth villages

Category C ... Expansion contained villages - including sub-categories :
 (a) Expansion for local needs
 (b) Minor infill
 (c) Expanded villages
 (d) Deferred expansion villages

NORFOLK :

Category (i) ... Local centres : villages (and small towns) suitable for residential estate development.

Category (ii) ... Villages where modest estate development would be suitable.

Category (iii) .. Villages where estate development would be inappropriate.

Category (iv) ... Small hamlets and other villages.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE :

Category 1 ... Growth villages outside the green belt.

Category 2 ... Growth villages within the green belt.

Category 3 ... Minor growth villages.

Category 4 ... Restricted expansion villages outside the green belt.

Category 5 ... Restricted expansion villages within the green belt.

Category 6 ... Conservation and special amenity villages.

Table 7.1 (continued)WEST SUSSEX :

Category A ... Moderate expansion villages

Category B ... Limited infill villages

Category CDevelopment discouraged villages

ISLE OF WIGHT :

There is no formal classification system adopted by the planning authorities concerned with development control on the Isle of Wight, but a number of designated 'rural centres' have been identified. These function as growth villages (see text of chapter for details).

Source : The chapter identifies those planning reports which were used as the most up to date reference for the classification of settlements in the individual counties. In addition interviews were held with some of the county planning authorities where it was felt necessary to clarify specific points of detail.

Table 7.2 The R_v Index (the ratio of selected villages to all villages within the study area).

County	R_v index
Huntingdonshire	1 : 12.6
Isle of Wight	1 : 4.8
Norfolk	1 : 12.8
Nottinghamshire	1 : 5.4
West Sussex	1 : 9.2
MEAN RATIO VALUE	1 : 9.2

The mean ratio value is a compound average calculated from the absolute ratio's of the five counties.

Table 7.3 The R_p Index (the ratio of selected villages to total rural population)

County	R_p index
Huntingdonshire	1 : 8,710
Isle of Wight	1 : 3,813
Norfolk	1 : 8,062
Nottinghamshire	1 : 5,866
West Sussex	1 : 10,679
MEAN RATIO VALUE	1 : 7,463

See the note in Table 6.4 for the definition of the selected villages used in these two tables. The calculation of the ratio's, and notes on the interpretation of the statistics are contained in the text of the chapter. The data in Table 7.3 is based on the 1971 Census.

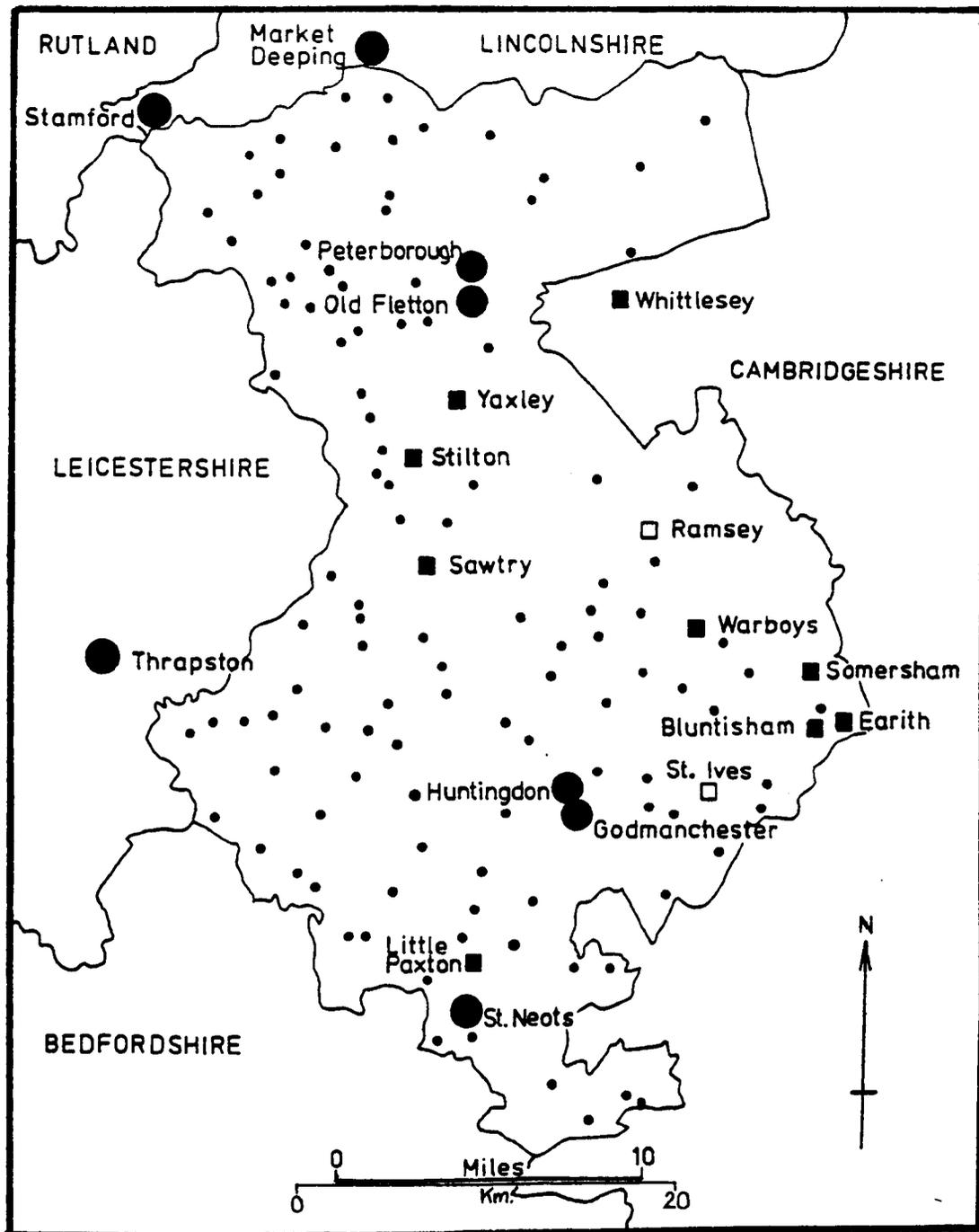
Table 7.4 The geographical distribution of non selected villages in relation to selected villages and urban centres.

Distance ¹ from the nearest selected village or urban centre	HUNTING-DONSHIRE	ISLE OF WIGHT	NORFOLK	NOTTING-HAMSHIRE	WEST SUSSEX
Under 1.5 miles	12.9	40.5	6.7	18.8	19.0
From 1.5 to 4.5 miles	64.5	59.5	79.9	69.4	68.3
Over 4.5 miles	22.4	-	13.4	11.8	12.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Mean distance of non selected villages from selected villages and urban centres (miles) MEAN INDEX	3.4	1.7	3.1	2.8	2.8

1. All distances are measured in linear distance (i.e. as the crow flies) and not in terms of real travelling distances.

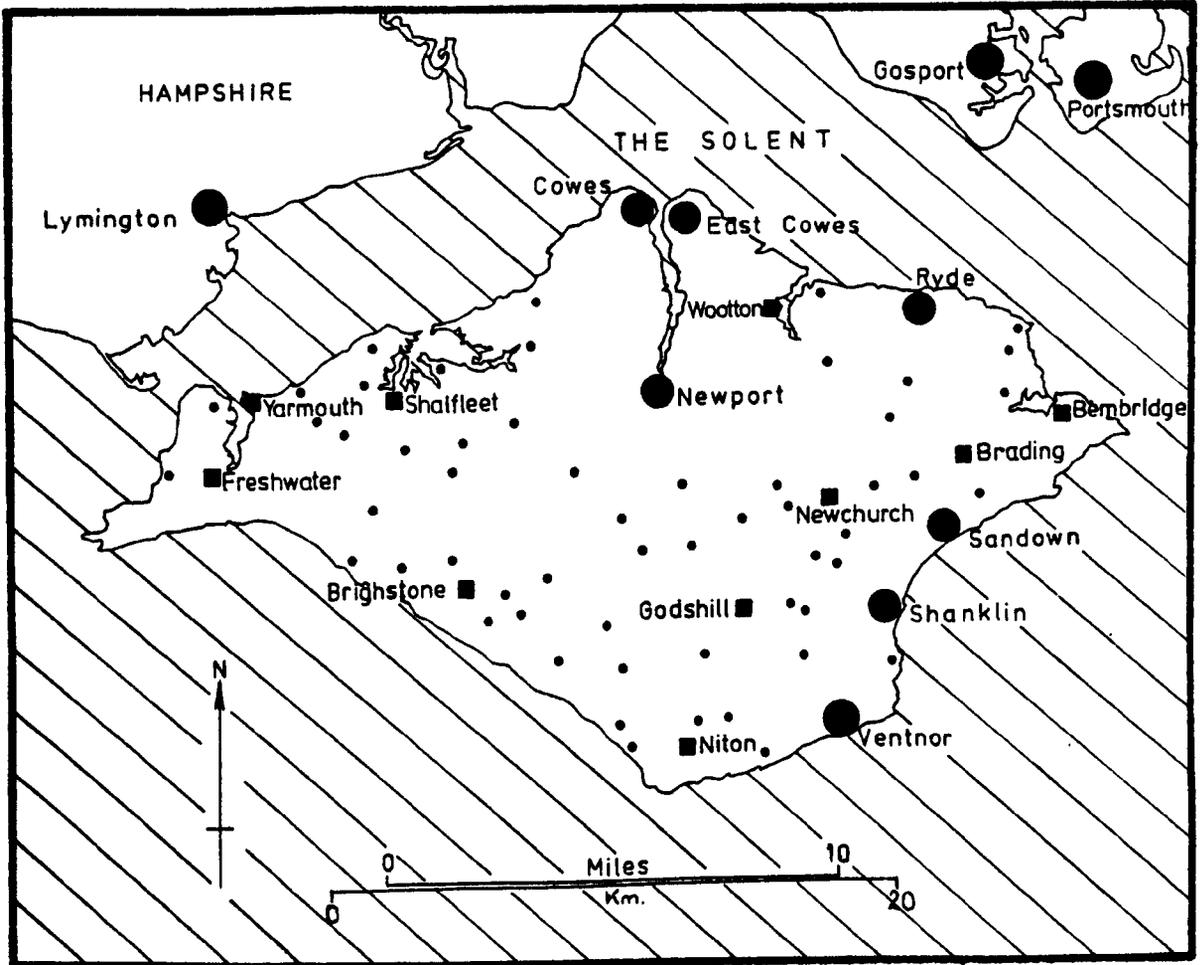
2. The selected villages are defined as the 'major growth villages' in Huntingdonshire, 'local centres' in Norfolk, 'growth villages' in Nottinghamshire, 'moderate expansion villages' in West Sussex, and 'rural centres' in the Isle of Wight (see Table 7.1).

Figure 7.1 The spatial structure of the settlement classification in Huntingdonshire



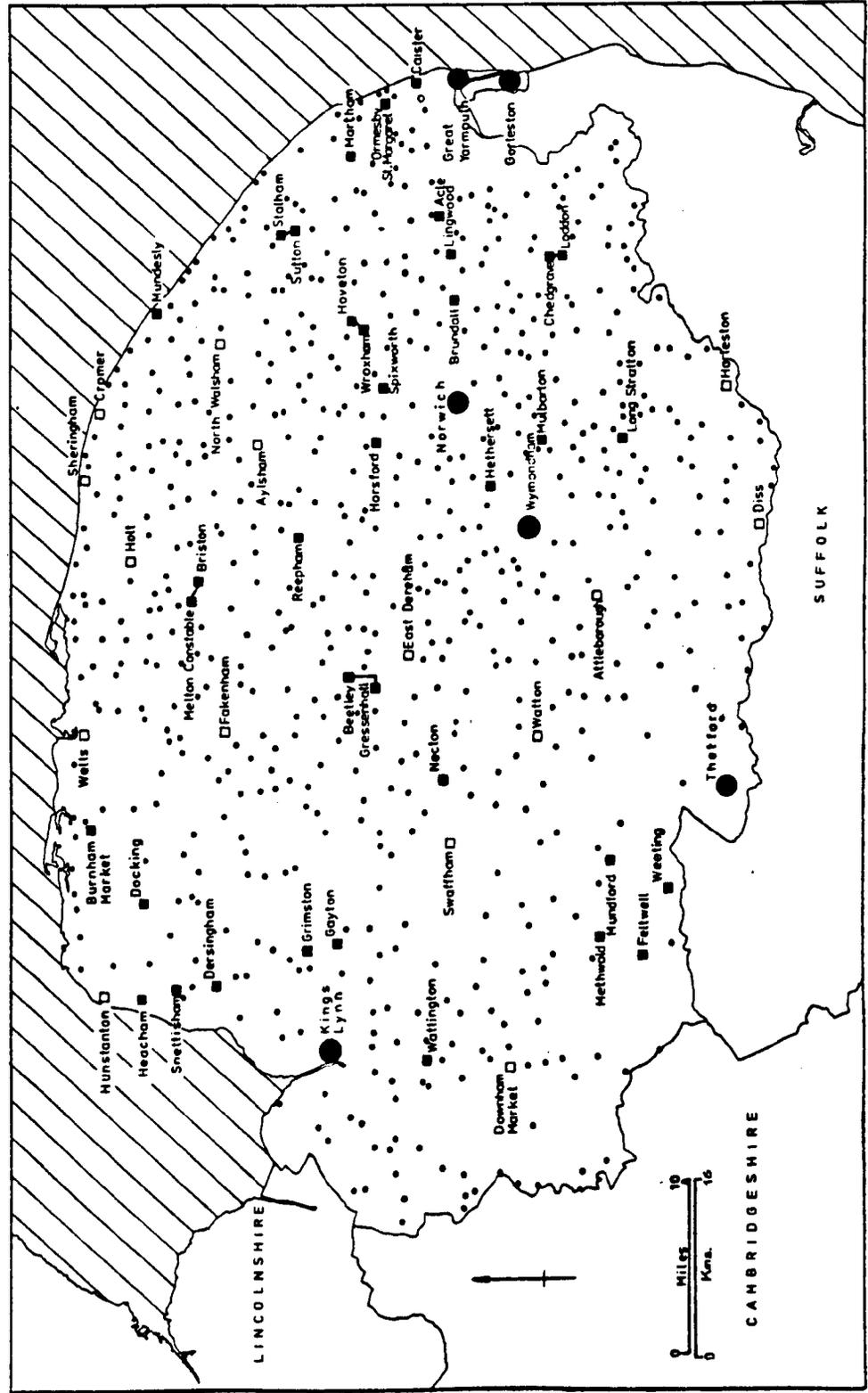
- Non selected villages
- Selected villages
- Rural centres not classified as selected villages (i.e. small towns)
- Urban centres (population over 10,000)

Figure 7.2 The spatial structure of the settlement classification
in the Isle of Wight



- Non selected villages
- Selected villages
- Urban centres (population above 10,000)

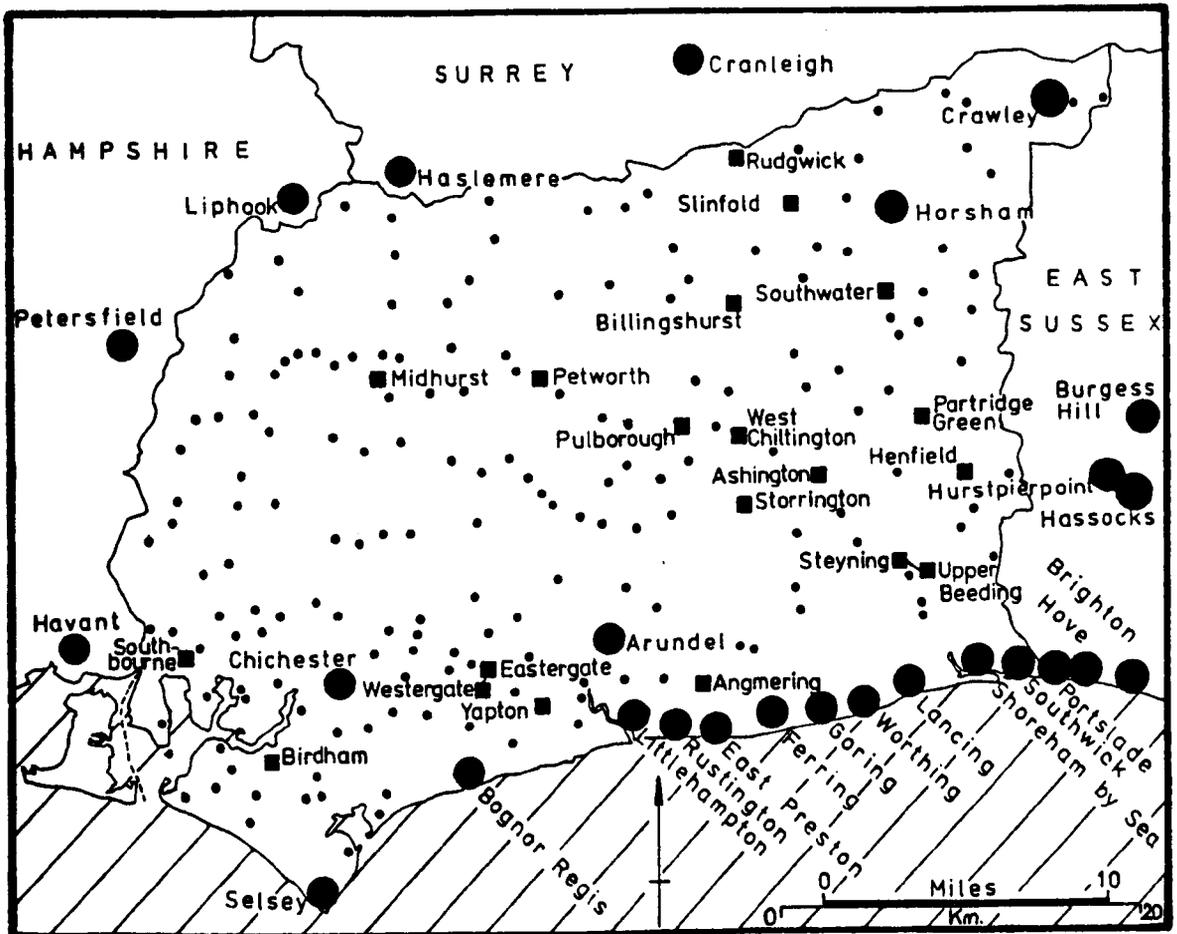
Figure 7.3 The spatial structure of the settlement classification in Norfolk



KEY

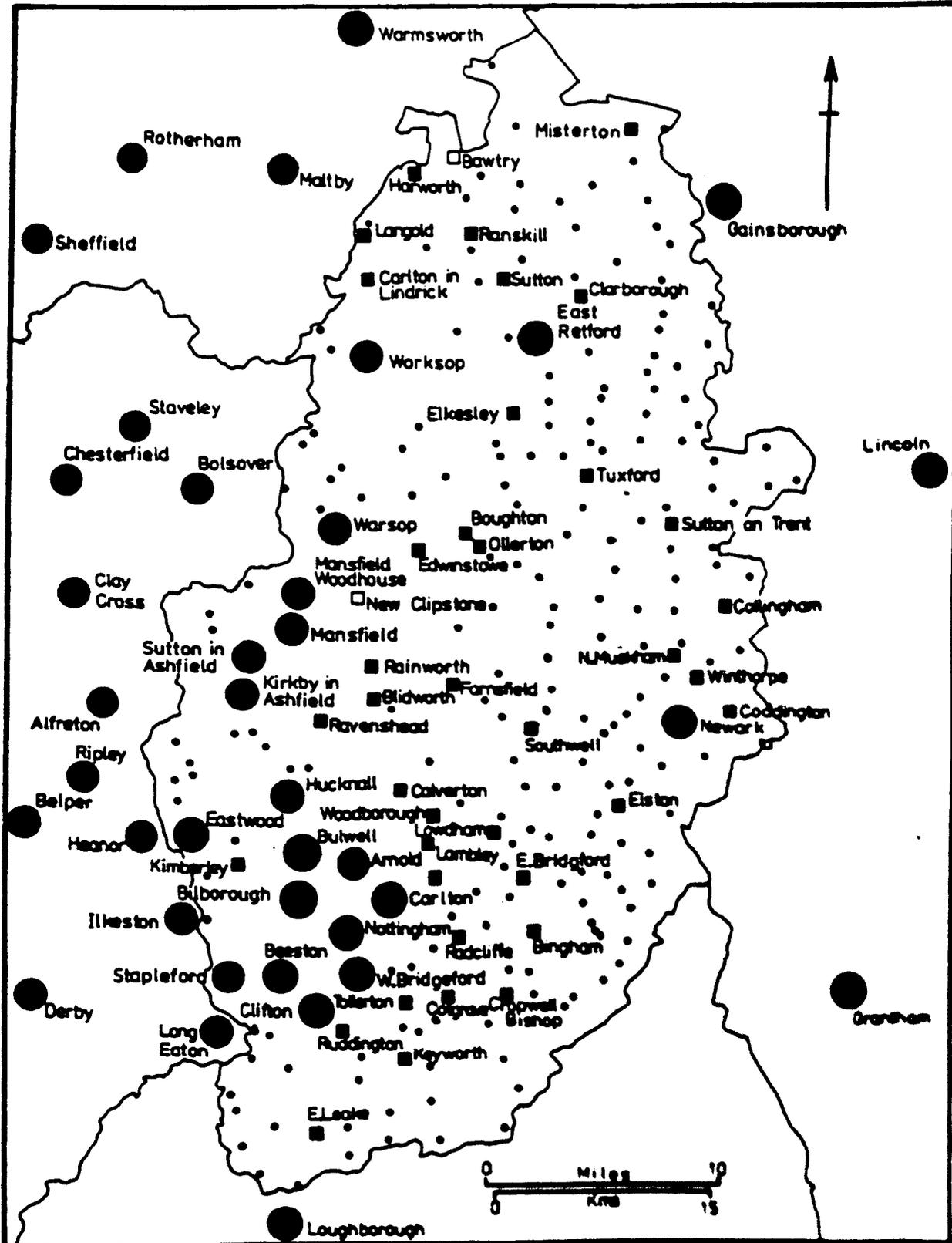
- Non selected villages
- Selected centres
- Rural centres not classified as selected villages (i.e. small towns)
- Urban centres (population over 10,000)

Figure 7.4 The spatial structure of the settlement classification in West Sussex



- Non selected villages
- Selected villages
- Urban centres (above 10,000 population)

Figure 7.5 The spatial structure of the settlement classification in Nottinghamshire



- Non-selected villages
- Selected villages
- Rural centres not classified as villages (i.e. small towns)
- Urban centres (population over 10,000)