

# NON-PLAN

—a proposal by Cedric Price, being his detailed contribution to a combined article by Reyner Banham, Peter Hall and Paul Barker, published in *New Society*, March 21, 1969.

Planning control and legislation at present compensates for the unevenness of access, wealth, opportunity potential, and environment of various areas, and in so doing attempts to make all conditions equal—if not in appearance at least in the capacity to change. Thus it would be considered more heinous to destroy a Georgian square in Gateshead than in Bristol. Non-plan is intended to destroy such a system of values. The introduction of Non-plan in four areas selected and illustrated here, would in fact encourage unevenness of development and exploitation of peculiarities. In environmental terms 'different' would supersede 'good' and 'bad'.

Under Non-plan towns as such would no longer have to justify their inherited location and bulk by providing a centralized amenity pad for half the area between themselves and towns of equal size. Agriculture would no longer be able

to obtain protection for the dirtiest and most wasteful of workshop floors on the spurious grounds that it alone could provide the necessary open-air amenity lung between urban settlements.

Non-plan, in reducing the permanence of the assumed worth of past uses of space through avoiding their very reinforcement, might well give society not only an opportunity to re-assess such worth but to establish a new order of priorities of land, sea and air use which would be related more directly to the valid social and economic life-span of such uses.

Such a supposition, however, is bordering on moral prediction, if not planning, and this is just the situation that Non-plan is trying to avoid by encouraging unselfconscious immediacy 'at all times'. Motown must make way for 'no-town'—Utopia for non-plan.

## General recommendations

### Restrictions to be lifted.

All physical planning restrictions including:  
Road, rail and other transport routes other than national  
Access points—type, size and frequency—to existing routes  
Preservation for cultural, historic, etc., reasons  
Aesthetic control for new buildings  
Land use control—including industrial and commercial development  
Compulsory purchase orders  
Plot ratio and height controls  
Other restrictions to be removed include:  
Particular privileges related to Crown Lands and War Department property  
Present rights of the Forestry Commission  
Clean air and water pollution Acts (part)  
Farm subsidies—both for capital expenditure and production  
National Parks Act  
Mineral rights  
Common Lands law  
Flight path restrictions—not National or International  
Fisheries Acts  
Wildlife Acts  
Housing subsidies as at present applied to 'permanent' investment  
Major public works grants  
Direction of industry or labour  
L.O.B. (Location of Offices Bureau)  
Local radio and TV frequency control  
Sunday Observance Act  
Countryside Commission related to the areas

### Controls—physical or legislative—that would need to be retained to enable normal relationships with the rest of the U.K.

National and international control of flight paths, radio frequencies and power lines  
Parts of Clean Air and Pollution Acts related to health  
All Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Health anti-disease legislation  
Existing national physical links  
National policy on immigration—however odious

### New controls or legislation required to enable Non-plan to function.

New legislation would be required in relation to:  
Off-shore development  
Foreign investment and movement of money and capital goods  
Land tenure and the reform or substitution of 'freehold'  
Major standard and discretionary grants made by central government to local authorities must be stopped first, since it is these more than anything else which perpetuate urban size and structure in irrelevant forms  
Similarly, agricultural subsidies must go since these again originate 'rural' land use patterning long before the planners locate a 'green belt'. In addition, various central government aid programmes, such as those for 'development areas', provide the causation for physical development plans, and not the other way round  
Finally, the likely re-organization of local government into even larger, more autonomous 'city regions', will further aggravate the assumed self-contained quality of regional planning responsibilities. Therefore, in these areas, no such re-organization—on the lines of city-regions—must be allowed to take place  
Other, largely post-war legislation, which has acted against social mobility such as housing subsidies and redundancy payments, must be terminated

### Sequence of development patterning considered applicable to all selected cases.

In general development, in accordance with existing development, plans would become more fragmentary and the present clearly defined pressures would start making themselves felt, again in a fragmentary form, physically. However, long-term, large-scale development plans might be prepared, if not already in existence, and their sponsors might well start acquiring areas from which other long-term development would be excluded. Thus a continuous shanty town condition would occur where only development of a recognized short-life span would appear. Such a development might in itself give a working clue as to the efficacy of the original long-term plan  
Again, service leads to the area would most likely be introduced in patterns little related to the improving of the servicing of the existing above-ground developments. The attraction to these areas of industries, services, activities and individuals at present feeling restriction elsewhere would be likely at first to produce a rather bloody initial confrontation period, where opposing interests could no longer rely on the lobbying of support from 'outside'. (cf. The opposition to an atomic power station on the Isle of Wight.)  
However, present development and its eventual quality of life for the community suffers through archaic and mis-directed attention to a multitude of factors in the belief that the resulting grey compromise will satisfy all—or at least jolly well *should*.

The main thesis of Non-plan is that, through enabling uneven development, the particularization of occupation, habit and appetite will be more likely to occur in places and at times best suited to it.

Non-plan, through its permissive attitude to change, is likely to increase the validity of continuous redevelopment resulting in activities and forms as yet unrealized.

The fact that the results may not be what we would expect exposes our insufficiency of planning expertise and does not necessarily negate such results.

### Consideration of allowable effects of pilot areas to permanently affect areas not so designated.

The allowable effects in general would concern the reduction of demands for land and services previously made on adjacent areas. This in turn would cause re-organization including contraction or amalgamation of services previously operated independently by individual boroughs and county boroughs. Thus, in effect, selected Non-plan might accelerate, in neighbouring areas, the form of local government likely to be recommended by the Royal Commission (an unfortunate by-product).

Also, activities and facilities found lacking in Non-plan areas would presumably appear more frequently than before in adjacent areas. Whereas the recently formed economic planning areas at present tend to be developing from the existing urban areas on which they were based and enclosed, the development of Non-plan areas is more likely to occur rapidly in the peripheral areas than in any of the existing urban areas it encloses since its growth is no longer generated by them nor physically determined by their location. Thus, in what has been referred to as 'areas of least tension' (J. R. James, Chief Planner, Ministry of Housing and Local Government), is likely to occur the most active, if not most tensioned, development in the Non-plan areas. The existing towns, like any static natural hazard, are likely to take longer to change.

It is possible, therefore, that the juxtaposition of Non-plan and plan areas will produce a new form of development.

The only other general allowable effect on the other areas would be their likely realization of the advantages of having a Non-plan area of their own, which, although a national asset, could be of immense regional commercial value. (cf. Blackpool 1880–1930).



## Detail considerations

### Area 1 East Midlands

#### Urban populations (1962)

E. Retford	18,020
Newark-on-Trent	24,580
Nottingham	314,360
Sheffield	495,240
Worksop	34,840

(map 30 miles across)



### Area 2 Portsmouth, Isle of Wight, New Forest, Southampton

#### Urban populations (1962)

Bishops Waltham	2,883
Cowes	17,590
Eastleigh	38,080
Fareham	63,170
Fawley	7,685
Gosport	68,850
Havant	78,120
Hayling	8,942
Hythe	1,266
Lymington	29,220
Newport, IOW	18,950
Petersfield	8,140
Portsmouth	226,670
Romsey	6,400
Ryde	19,690
Sandown	13,510
Shanklin	
Southampton	205,790
Romsey	6,400

(map 30 miles across)



### Present condition in selected areas:

Increasingly prosperous area but with decreasing dependence on traditional sources of wealth, e.g. agriculture and coal  
 Good north-south national physical links  
 Numerous multi-directional area physical links  
 Several areas of concentrated 'natural' beauty  
 Expanding and over-crowded urban centres  
 Comparatively little secondary cultural patterning (i.e. dormitory settlement)  
 Increasing amount of cheap electrical energy

Already in the Greater London orbit  
 Last major port area with immense capacity for expansion (BTDB to expand)  
 Four tides a day  
 Declining naval activity in highly equipped dockyard area (Portsmouth, etc.)  
 Victorian island (Isle of Wight) with diminishing rail network  
 Small but important growth industries (hovercraft, hovermarine, etc.)  
 Largest oil refinery in Europe (Fawley)  
 Flourishing secondary industries: Fawley (synthetic rubber)  
 Skilled labour force looking for work (Portsmouth)  
 Rapid rail (70 mins. from S'pton) and road and hovercraft links to London  
 Good sea access to Continent from 'on-off' berths with spare capacity  
 Increasing electricity (new power stations at Marchwood and Fawley)  
 Small boats industry and servicing  
 Good sailing areas  
 Varied berthing and laying-up facilities for small craft—little additional capacity  
 Historic towns, villages and monuments—Romsey (abbey), Winchester (cathedral), (Beaulieu palace and abbey), New Forest, Buckler's Hard, I. of W  
 Powerful preservationist lobbyists  
 Assorted architectural knights (Beaulieu and Buckler's Hard)  
 Yachting Fraternity (Hamble and Beaulieu and Lymington)  
 Showman gentry—Edward Montagu, Edmund de Rothschild  
 Expanding university—Southampton  
 Expanding technical training facilities—Portsmouth, Havant and Fawley  
 Undeveloped coastline—Southampton Water and Solent  
 Rapidly growing population—Southampton, Fawley, Hythe

### Immediate' reductions in activity and/or population.

Agriculture and mining to reduce man power and probably area in the former and output in the latter  
 Municipal activities undertaken by smaller towns likely to be reduced  
 Production of cheaper grades of steel likely to reduce

Reduction of naval establishment at Portsmouth

### Immediate' increase in activity and population\*

Primarily this area would become an increasingly used residential area  
 Industrial development will spread from the existing centres along the national routes. Ribbon development providing even greater choice of residential areas  
 Non-directional and non-focusing social patterning is likely to result in a large amount of mobile short-term servicing—shops, filling stations, entertainment, etc.  
 Voluntary residential ghetto development  
 Increasing particularization of use of 'natural' amenities  
 Controlled use and direction of major national river (Trent), agriculture, power production and recreation (limited)  
 Possible Thinkbelt development in old industrial net between Nottingham and Sheffield 30-40 miles (i.e. half length of Los Angeles)  
 In general, major increase of land use and population coupled with rapid iteration of location and activity

Immense increase in heavy industry related to water-borne resources—oil, etc. (The advent of natural gas and atomic energy as primary power sources will accelerate such an increase rather than retard it since by-product industries will proliferate)  
 Confrontation between industrial and recreational interests likely to result in very clear demarcation:  
 Industry on entire length and both shores of Southampton water  
 Recreational on Solent coast, Beaulieu River, Lymington and the Isle of Wight  
 Major increase in population on Havant-Portsmouth-Ryde-Shanklin axis  
 National and particularly South-East + London accessibility of area will put total population recreational pressure on area in contrast to present exclusive exploitation by the professional middle class and tired knights  
 • Likely increase of Southampton university as a particular service to local industry and docking  
 Complete rethink on use of Royal Forest (New)  
 Winchester-Eastleigh-Southampton—continuous packaging, finishing, warehousing, industrial zone as a termination of increased feeds on existing direct line from Birmingham area—the most northerly of valid industrial complexes in England by 1980  
 Total pleasure use of Isle of Wight in first 12 years of Non-plan—possibly in single direction. (The Government's participation in Non-plan must not be ignored)  
 Non-plan will cause the isolation of private 'fun' developments such as at Beaulieu unless they relate to the total area—in this case the forest, water and the island. Beaulieu, Solent, Cowes axis is a likely growth feed

It must not become necessary in these proposals and in fact to make estimates (either extrapolatory or by prediction) of long-term growth since this negates the self-adjusting factor implicit in Non-plan

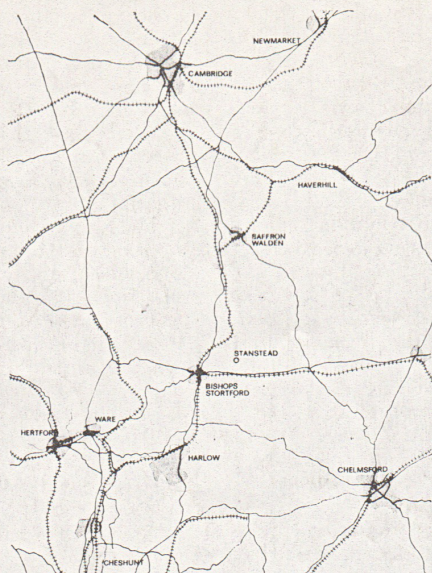


### Area 3 Cambridge Downs

#### Urban populations (1962)

Bishops Stortford	20,490
Cambridge	95,380
Helmsford	51,180
Heshunt	36,630
Harlow	58,180
Laverhill	7,380
Lertford	16,670
Newmarket	11,460
Wotton Bassett	8,110
Ware	12,460

(map 30 miles across)



### Area 4 Lake District

#### Urban populations (1962)

Barrow-in-Furness	64,890
Cockermouth	6,030
Keswick	4,410
Whitehaven	27,610
Windermere	6,620
Workington	29,710

(map 30 miles across)



Medium value agricultural area  
 Top value dormitory area (rustic lobbyists)  
 Picturesque fittings requiring motorized access  
 Poor mass communications  
 Near-static university—Cambridge  
 Near-complete new town—Harlow  
 ILC expansion in several towns  
 Rapid motor links with London  
 Expanding population  
 Plenty of space—with little public access  
 Located at base of 'fan-access' area to E. Anglian coast  
 Specialized space consuming activities other than agriculture, horse breeding, SAF, etc  
 Flat land  
 Fragmented light industry

Primarily a short-spell pleasure pad  
 Rapidly shrinking heavy industry—mainly coastal, coal mining, steel, and shipbuilding  
 Single major port (Barrow) in process of reduction and amalgamation with Fleetwood  
 Large shallow bay (Morecambe)  
 Limited agricultural value  
 Large Forestry Commission involvement  
 Large areas of particular use and protection—National Forest, bird preserve, etc  
 Lakes and hills and attendant activities  
 Low population—declining

Reduction of agricultural activity  
 Decrease in local authority employment  
 Reduction in small-scale static population services—i.e. village shops, postmen, etc

Reduction in industrial population of coastal towns—particularly at Barrow  
 Possible reduction of present rail network in Workington-Whitehaven area

Establishment of major international airport is likely to result in its being the first area used as a continental staging post irrespective of any national proximities, and of particular value in relation to its ground based activities  
 Non-plan will encourage massive development of secondary industries  
 Cambridge-Milton Keynes loose links may well provide additional fragmented educational servicing web (cf. *Atom*, AD 5/68)

Agriculture to withdraw to periphery of area and away from east-coast links  
 Large increase in population  
 Remaining 'beauty spots' likely to become integrated into a large residential blanket, the social servicing points of which (i.e. schools, hospitals, etc) will be sited midway between present discernible urban foci  
 Peculiar industrial activities and the accompanying employment opportunities will result in London becoming merely a source of labour and not a requirer of services

Highly sophisticated internationally based industrial, commercial and scientific industries and services are likely to be established in these areas primarily by outside (part foreign) investment and are likely to be staffed by a largely multi-national rapidly moving labour force  
 Thus the provision of anonymous (cf. nationally recognizable) servicing and equipment (including 'buildings') is likely  
 Large increase in population and activity  
 Rapid alteration of activities  
 Cambridge University to become more particular—probably post-graduate scientific

Primarily, the whole area will be developed as a national enjoyment zone but this will consist of extremely particular and exclusive activity zones  
 Thus only coordinated result of non-plan will be national, and possibly international accessibility and the resultant systems and gear  
 Increase in all-year general human servicing industries  
 Increase in seasonal specialized activity servicing industries  
 Increase in temporary phased-use (but not mobile) housing and equipment  
 While functional location is likely to become increasingly static the whole area will become increasingly sensitive to time scheduling  
 Additional lakes likely to be constructed  
 Re-think by Forestry Commission—pit-pros less important than wind break  
 Possible re-think on Morecambe Bay Barage possibilities

#### Resultant forms, patterns, systems and artifacts for all four areas.

- It is likely that major considerations and proposals will be under the heading
- Housing as a consumer commodity
- Variable industrial servicing plant
- Mobile educational servicing and short-life education and commercial kits
- Permanent power sources with variable supply
- Transportable peculiar free-time activity kits
- Fragmented replaceable commercial outlets
- Anonymous and invisible social and life-supporting servicing
- Temporary and permanent adjustable water control
- Physical communication equipment and grids
- Area and regional physical control equipment (defoliation, etc.)



## Amplification of application of Non-plan to Portsmouth, Isle of Wight, New Forest, Southampton (PINS) area\*

This area, at present subject to long-term development planning, both public and private, is likely to provide—as a result of Non-plan—not merely the normal confrontation of expansionist and preservationist—but also an example of the development pattern resulting from the confrontation of two previously opposed viewpoints. If Non-plan is to contribute amongst other things to the coordination of public investments, then it is unlikely that in this area the options will be kept open unless the cost benefit to the community of such investments is calculated on a national rather than regional basis. For here is an area with several traditional short-term or particular activities such as annual seaside holidays and maintaining a Royal fleet whose main contribution is at a national scale.

However, neither of these uses in this particular area can be said to be expansionist when compared with the massive industrial development on the west shore of Southampton water which has gained momentum over the past 15 to 20 years—the Fawley oil refinery, its attendant secondary industries, the new power station, the planned enlargement of Southampton docks.

A third, rather objectionable, pressure on the area is that resulting from an uneasy union of local landowners, residents, yachtsmen and odd preservation societies. These interests have not in themselves contributed a great deal to the development of the area until recently, when under the ever-doubtful slogan of 'preserving the Nation's heritage', an atomic power station was rejected for the Isle of Wight, a consortium of landowners of the Beaulieu river valley have initiated a development plan which puts the visitor very much in his place, and the range of what you can do in the New Forest would bore an impotent Man of the Trees.

Present local authority planning is still restricted by that which Non-plan will make void, and it is unlikely that plans to double the dinghy capacity of the Hamble or provide playing fields on reclaimed areas of upper Portsmouth harbour would be mourned with its advent. In fact, the most likely immediate result of Non-plan would be a scrapping of the compartmented thinking both locally and in Whitehall in relation to what (activity) can be done to which particular area.

The zoning by protective ownerships of nearly 50 per cent of the Isle of Wight would be exposed in all its patronizing cant.

The major cargo dock works—the western docks extension scheme—at Southampton would with Non-plan open up additional waterside land for development immediately to its east and north of Marchwood. Increased links to the industrial Midlands and alterations in the nature and extent of the passenger liner trade are unlikely to be affected by Non-plan, although increasing development of new growth industries—such as GEM manufacture, petro-chemicals and synthetics—would be likely.

Thus the situation at the outset of Non-plan would be, as already stated in the only planning terms that are at present available, a confrontation of opposing land uses. However, Non-plan enables two new elements to be

introduced into the assessment of any particular physical, social and communicative planning situation.

Firstly, the element of time, particularly related to the valid social life of particular artifacts can be recognized and measured. This, in turn, enables concern with the frequency of development to be extracted from concern with its content.

Secondly, the national contribution to the total exploitation of Non-plan can for the first time concentrate on encouraging physical, organizational and economic intermixing resulting in hybrid activities, services and land uses. It will no longer be a case, for example, of industrial use excluding leisure activities, but of new industrial/pleasure facilities being provided since the advantages and attraction of living in such an area will be closely related to the availability of individual and community activities that are not available elsewhere.

The division of time between free-will and directed (e.g. leisure and work) will be blurred. Other instances of this new mix are likely to result in domestic patterning to vary more as a result of the season or even the weather than as to content or length of tenancy. Thus residents may very well become 'auto-nomads' in fine weather, the evenings, weekends (2-4 days), school holidays, etc., while visitors draw on either existing stock of empty properties—including hotels, motels, boats—or themselves remain nomadic. Since the likelihood of the overseas holiday becoming more and more available than the use of free-time areas and facilities in this country, they will become more continuous and differentiated more by peculiarity of activity than by accessibility, resulting in increasing similarity of demands from both 'residents' and 'visitors' of particular areas.

The particularity of the PINS complex is primarily the extensive coastline and protected water, and, secondarily, the New Forest and heathlands and the 'magic' of an island.

A possible first stage use of the area is shown on the plan, while its future use patterning would depend largely on the increase or decrease in social mobility of the population attracted by this increasingly particular coastal pocket of temperate off-shore piece of Europe.

Finally, the immediate effect on the present physical pattern of the area will be a noticeable change of use of existing vehicular and pedestrian routes, a diminution in purely agricultural land use on opening to public access and use of areas previously private.

The intermittent population would be likely to increase, while industrial zones would become more continuous.

Small existing towns and villages, particularly in the New Forest and Isle of Wight, would be likely to be preserved as 'gems', their invisible servicing tuned up, and the areas between them increasingly filled with housing.

The psychological shock resulting from the opening up of this previous reserve of the rich or resident is likely to help the development of pleasure facilities at a sufficient rate and scale to avoid the chaos that might be assumed by those who normally balance demand with the restrictions required for traditional social change.

The ghost areas in these early stages might well become the centre city areas of towns like Portsmouth. The resultant development possible would enable, for the first time for 300 years, short-term strategy to dictate urban user re-use, disuse, or refuse.

## Outline proposal of initial content

### Industry|learning, pleasure

Factory complexes accessible to public for through routing, work, education, sightseeing

### Living|learning

Individual houses—packaged consumer product presented. Mobile homes. Short-stay transportable living shells, requiring additional living packs.

### Water fun|learning

Coastal boat—people servicing stations—transportable, and capable of reinforcing existing coastal development. Large-scale mobile 'harbours', seasonal movement. Continental staging stations.

### Movement|pleasure

Open-air servicing equipment—shelters. Seasonal particular vehicular and human servicing linked to static attractions, e.g. existing Beaulieu road 'Potel' for annual New Forest pony sales.

### Histrionic|idleness

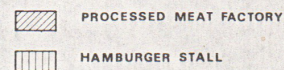
Highly serviced, occasional commercial social shelters, advertising and information complex e.g. Beaulieu under one roof. High level fore fun routes.

### Learning|commercial|social

Land-based and water-based facilities providing 24-hour tuning-up to normal servicing.

\*Reference to National Parks Commission, Coastal Preservation and Development—the Coasts of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, H.M.S.O. 1967

Left: Spiral time badge for two activities



Right: Time, frequency, location and movement of activities. Any number of activities can be compared. Angle of line indicates speed required for locational change. Variable extent of cyclical change is shown by separation of blocks. Variation in daily hours is shown by depth of blocks. People can be added by dots or vertical lines of numerical equivalence.

