

Regional Studies Association

Winter Conference, 23 November 2012



“A critical look at the UK’s interest in the
‘smart growth’ evident in European
exemplar developments”

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What we will consider

- Where people go
- What they look for
- Resonances in the UK
- Why it's different in the U.K.
- Suggestions for the future



European practice

- Smart
- Creative
- Sustainable
- Inclusive



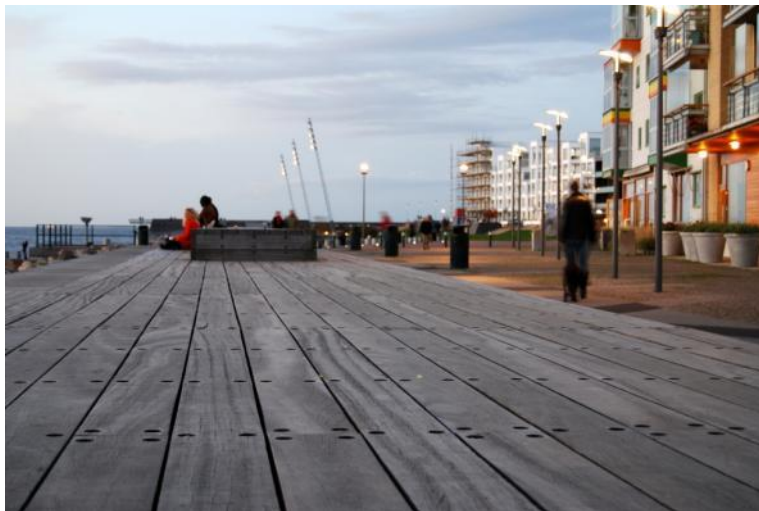
The Urbanism Hippy Trail – What we all go to see



What we go to see



What we go to see

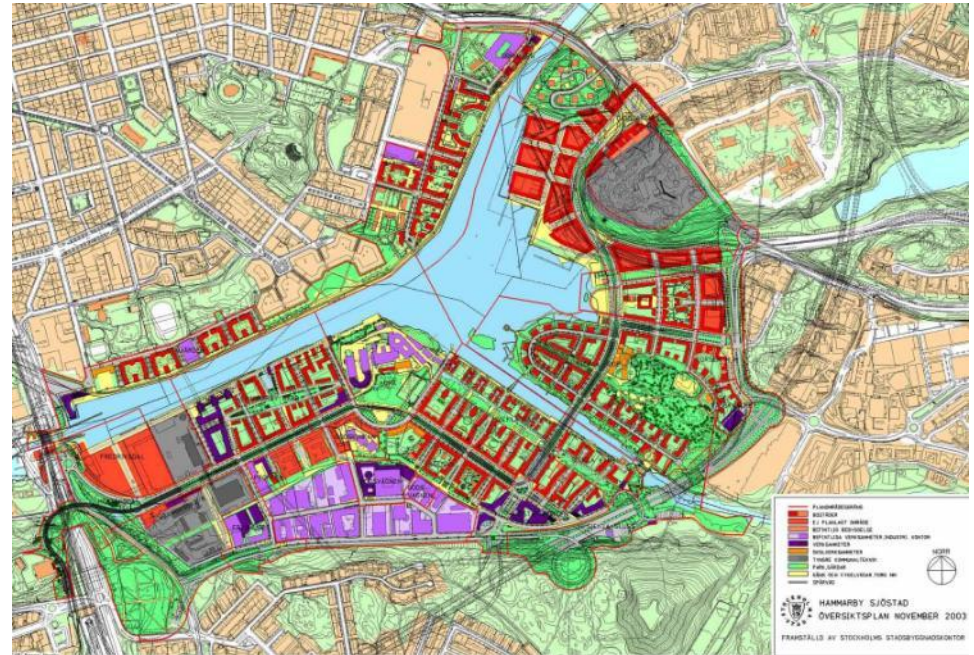


What we go to see



Why we go there

- Design
- Deliverability
- Sustainability standards
- Inspiration
- Understand the partnerships
- Governance
- Community



Hammarby Sjöstad Masterplan, 2003

Why we go there

- To understand the differences
- The constraints
- The politics
- The role of the city
- The history of development
- The expectations



Western Harbour, Malmo

Some interesting developments here too



UK examples



UK examples



So why aren't there more of these in the U.K.?

- UK mainstream more short-term focused
- 'Gladiatorial' approach to development
- Inconsistent support from central government
- A limit to numbers of philanthropic/ enlightened land-owners



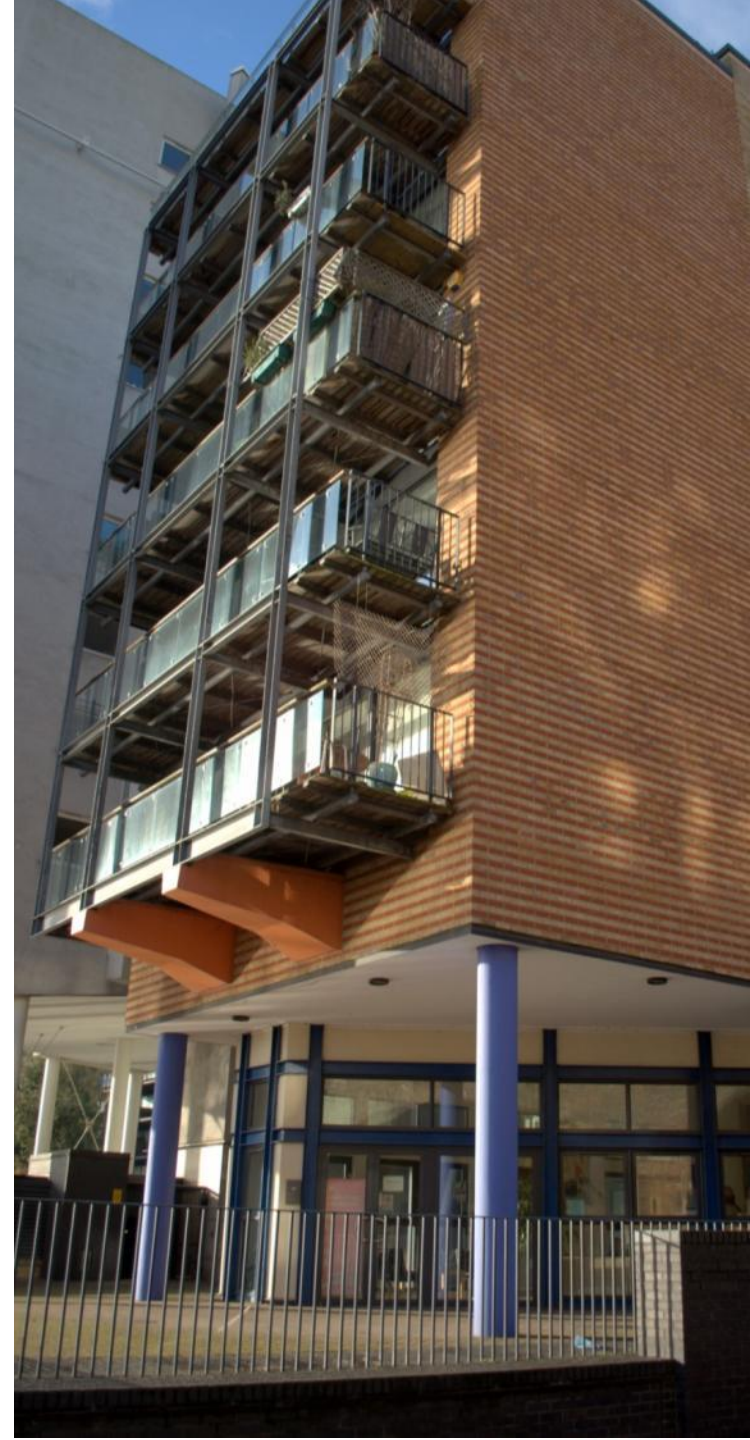
UK challenges

- UK housebuilding monopolies
- Inconsistent design expertise
- Limited readiness to share long-term stakes
- UK agents / developers not on research trips
- Restrictions on financial resources

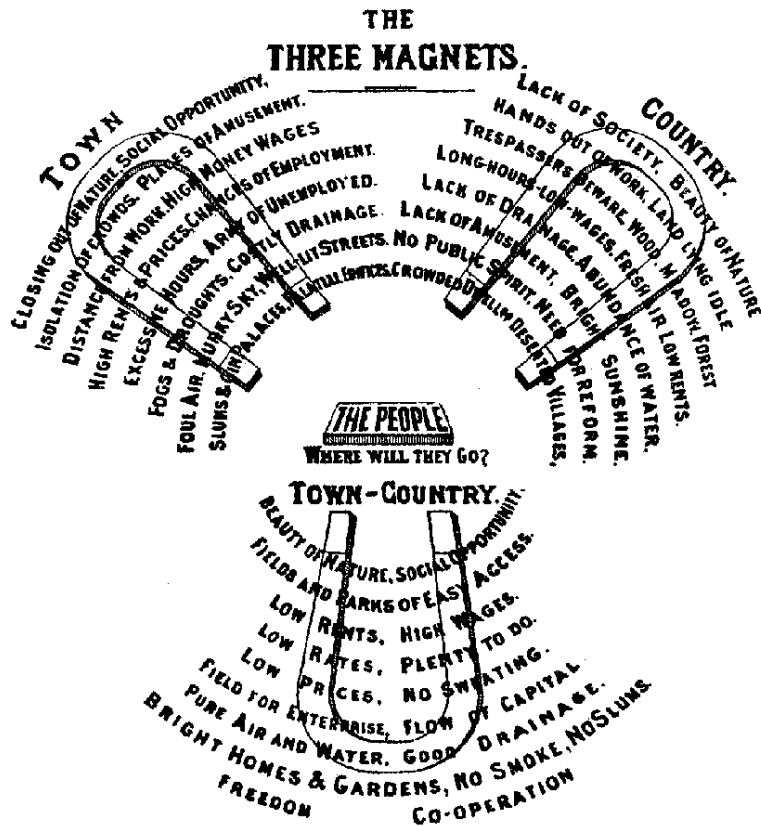


UK challenges

- Reluctance to front load infrastructure costs
- Limited appetite for more 'new towns' – or any development
- Limited permitted roles for community stakeholders
- Fixation on house values, not neighbourhood values



Does the future mirror the past?



- Garden Cities.....
-New Towns.....
-SUEs.....
-Ecotowns.....
-Garden Cities

Suggested futures

- Using CPOs (or other possession order) to secure land
- New obligations for the financial sector
- Scaling up 'mutual' approaches
- Maximise options for 'modular' site development and mix



Suggested futures

- Create 'laboratory site' exemplars
- Stimulate entry by EU partner agencies
- 'Good neighbourhood' codes & benchmarks
- Need for high levels of public endorsement



Concluding remarks.....

- Clear that EU sites are attractive to research
- Honesty required about UK limitations
- Need for long-term focus to new partnerships
- Providing quality can address local scepticism

